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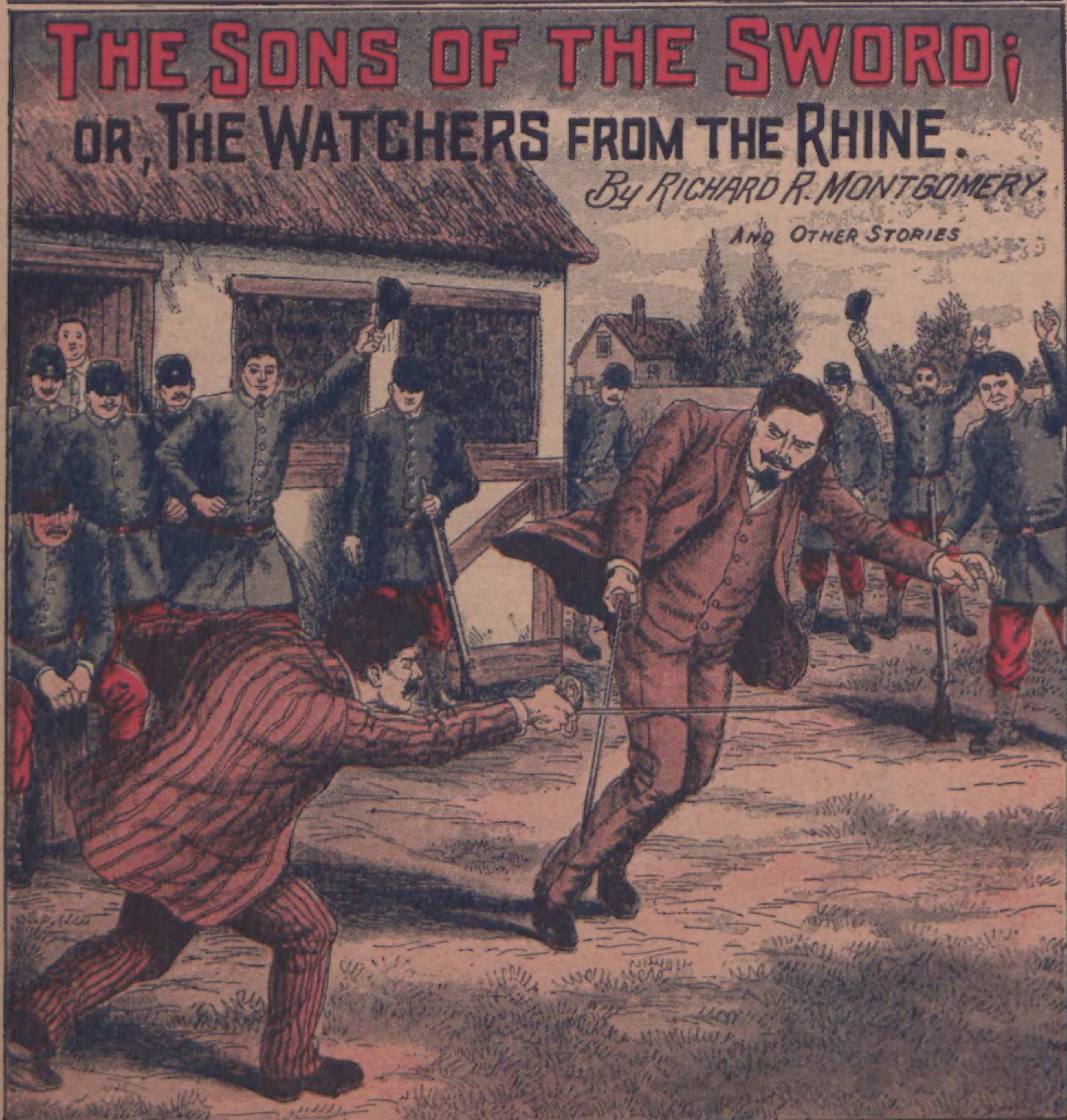
NEW YORK, AUGUST 27, 1924

Price 8 Cents

THE SONS OF THE SWORD; OR, THE WATCHERS FROM THE RHINE.

By RICHARD R. MONTGOMERY.

AND OTHER STORIES



"Spare me, great giant! If you are strong, you should be merciful!" Even while the little fellow was speaking, he struck Blanchard a very strong blow on the leg. Another tremendous shout of applause burst from the audience.

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PLUCK AND LUCK

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THE SON OF THE SWORD

OR, THE WATCHERS FROM THE RHINE

By RICHARD R. MONTGOMERY

CHAPTER I.—The Sons of the Sword.

A party of young men met one night some years ago in a small hall situated on one of the busy streets of Paris. To all appearance the young men were simply engaged in passing a pleasant evening, and yet each and all of them were really engaged in serious and dangerous work. As the hour of nine rang out from a neighboring church tower, one of the young men arose, cast a glance around at the others, and then addressed them in subdued but earnest tones, saying:

"Watchers from the Rhine, I think we will have important work on hand soon, as I count the fatal number present here now."

The other glanced around, and one of them responded:

"If war comes soon it is more than probable that one of us at least will fall in battle."

"We are all prepared to meet death in the cause of fatherland, but I wish to address you a few words on our present position."

The president of the club then proceeded, saying:

"The French police flatter themselves that they are the ablest and best disciplined body in the world, yet we have met here every week for over a year past without being intruded on by them. If they should pay us a visit, we are prepared to receive them. I believe that war will soon be declared, and it is well for each and all of us to thoroughly understand the work before us."

A tall young man of soldierly bearing then stood up and addressed the president, saying:

"My instructions are to proceed to the war as a French soldier, and give all the information possible to our friends across the Rhine."

"Correct, Carnot," rejoined the president.

A young lad of not more than eighteen then arose, saying:

"I am a medical student here in Paris, and I am instructed to proceed to the war as an assistant surgeon in the French army for the same purpose."

"You are correct, also, Munson," responded the president, with a friendly smile.

The others were silent, and they looked at the

president as if desiring instructions from him. He took the hint at once, and commenced by saying:

"You may not all know that I am known as Homer Balfe, that I am a German in heart and soul, and that I am employed as a clerk in the French war office, where it is believed that I am a Frenchman from Alsace. Five years ago, when I was a student in Berlin, I became initiated in a secret society known as the Sons of the Sword. That society was formed years ago to assist the Prussian Government in a war of revenge on France for the outrages committed on our people by the man known as Napoleon Bonaparte. In common with each and all of you, I was selected to join the society because my father, who was a member before me, encouraged me to learn the French language so that I could pass for a Frenchman."

The others around the table nodded their heads in approval, and the president continued, saying:

"Soon after joining the society I was sent on here to Paris with instructions to push myself into the war office here if possible, and I succeeded after patiently waiting for more than a year. I was also told to establish a club here, composed of young men from Germany who would be sent to me and who are engaged on the same mission. Other clubs of the same kind have been formed throughout the city, and in other large cities in France. I am proud to say that the Sons of the Sword have played their parts so well as to avoid being suspected by the French authority, that not a single traitor has been found among us, and that we have given our master, who is no other than the great Bismarck, the most valuable information concerning the doings at the French court, the organization of the French army, and the state of the fortifications in this land."

A murmur of applause greeted the words of the president as he continued, saying:

"As we are certain that war will soon be proclaimed between France and Germany, the work we have hitherto performed will be regarded as trivial to what is expected of us in the great campaign."

At that moment three knocks were heard at the

door of the meeting room, and Homer Balfe took his seat, seized a pipe, and commenced to smoke as he cried:

"Come in."

The door was opened, and a small boy with a very large head entered the room, followed by a tall, stern-looking man of forty years. Homer Balfe looked at the boy with an inquisitive eye as he inquired:

"Who is our visitor, Mascot?"

Before the boy could reply, the tall man stepped forward, saying:

"I am a police agent, and I came here to investigate your proceedings."

"You are welcome, sir. A chair for the gentleman, Mascot, and a fresh bottle of wine."

The dwarfish boy sprang to execute the order, and when the police spy was seated Balfe addressed him again, saying:

"Now, sir, what do you wish to know, and may we have the honor of knowing your name?"

"My name is Blanchard, and I wish to know the object of your meeting here."

"You can readily perceive our object, sir. This is a private club, and we meet once a week for purely social objects. We drink wine, we smoke, we tell stories, and we sing songs."

"Are you certain that you do not meet for a political purpose?" inquired the French detective.

"We are too happy to meddle in such matters, sir, and you can see that I am in the government employ."

As the president of the club spoke, he handed the detective a card. Blanchard looked at the card and then at the man who gave it to him, as he inquired:

"Are you all Frenchmen, and can you state your occupations?"

"We are all Frenchmen, and my friends can give very satisfactory accounts of themselves."

The young men then arose in turn and addressed the detective, stating their names, occupations, and places of residence. The dwarfish boy, called Mascot, who had a roguish, yet intelligent countenance, listened attentively, winking and nodding his head the while. The detective appeared to be satisfied about the investigation, and he addressed the president of the club, saying:

"This is all very satisfactory, but it was my duty to investigate."

He then looked at the dwarfish boy with his keen eyes, and inquired:

"Who is this boy?"

"That is Mascot, a boy from Strasbourg, who is adopted by the club," answered Homer Balfe. "He acts as our waiter when we meet here; he runs errands for all of us, and he waits on us in general."

"Where do you live, Mascot?" inquired the detective.

"I live with my friend and patron there, Monsieur Balfe, but I will soon have apartments of my own, as I am paying addresses to a rich young widow who is as beautiful as Venus herself."

"How old are you, sir?"

"Great men have no age, and I could not tell you mine."

"Are you a great man, then?"

"The Widow Blanchard thinks so."

"Do you allude to the Widow Blanchard who keeps a store on the next street?"

"That is my divine lady, and she will be Madam

Mascot next week," answered the dwarf, in the most serious manner.

"You impudent little viper, that is my sister-in-law, and I will break your head if you ever mention her name again."

"I defy you to mortal combat, and you can have your choice of weapons. The divine lady told me that you were a beast, and I see it for myself now."

"You hideous little imp, I'll break your head for you now."

"Now you will have to fight me, you beast of the beasts."

Homer Balfe then interfered and seized the dwarf and flung him toward the door, as he cried:

"You little wretch, I will punish you for daring to insult the gentleman."

Mascot turned at the door, and yelled out:

"The monster seeks to wed my divine widow himself, and that is why he hates me. If he is a man he will meet me with swords or pistols in the morning."

All the other members of the club were making frantic efforts to suppress their mirth, while the detective kept raving like a madman, and crying:

"I'll beat that little wretch to death. I'll batter his ugly head into jelly. I'll take him right away to prison for daring to insult a government officer."

Homer Balfe attempted to appease the wrath of the excited man, but the detective would not be appeased, and he left the room, vowing vengeance against the Mascot. When the detective left the building Mascot appeared from a hiding-place under the stairs, and then sprang up to the meeting-room again to address his friends, crying:

"Did I not treat the spy properly, Brother Watchers of the Rhine?"

"You did not, Mascot," answered the president in stern tones, "as I fear your insult will cause the man to watch us more closely hereafter. To your post again, as our business for the night is not concluded."

The dwarf obeyed the order, but he cast several indignant glances at the others as he moved to the door. The little fellow had scarcely left the room five minutes when he returned again, followed by a very handsome youth, who did not appear to be more than sixteen years of age. Victor Mauson, the young student, sprang forward at once and clasped the newcomer by the hand in a joyous manner as he whispered to him, saying:

"Dear Mabel, what brings you from the Rhine so unexpectedly?"

"Important news, Victor, but I must tell it to your president here first."

The speaker was a young girl in disguise, and she was Victor Mauson's sister. Mascot had hastened out of the room again on entering with her. When the door was closed on the little fellow, the young girl turned to Homer Balfe and the others, and addressed them in joyous tones, saying:

"Watchers from the Rhine, I bring you glad tidings. War has been declared between Germany and France, and the armies will move at once."

A shout of applause burst from those present, and then the president addressed them, saying:

"Sons of the Sword, this is great news; indeed,

although it was expected. Now we have glorious work before us, and we must gird our loins and our brains for great actions. Each and all of us must face death in one shape or another, yet we will welcome the grim monster in our efforts for dear fatherland."

CHAPTER II.—Blanchard and Mascot.

The disguised girl was known only to her brother and Homer Balfe, and none of the others present suspected that she was a girl. Victor Mauson introduced her to his friends as his younger brother Marcus, who had just arrived from Germany. It was well known to the Watchers from the Rhine that Victor's father held an important position under the great Bismarck, and that the information thus brought them was reliable. After consulting for some time over the important intelligence, the meeting was adjourned. Homer Balfe and the two Mausons were the last to leave the place, and Mascot met them at the door leading out into the street. The little fellow cast his sharp eyes at the disguised girl, and then drew Victor aside, saying:

"You are a handsome young fellow yourself, but your young brother will far surpass you in beauty if he lives to be a man."

"Are you really well acquainted with the young Widow Blanchard, who lives around the corner?"

"If you doubt me, bring your brother around with you and sup with us, as I am invited there to-night."

"Has she not furnished rooms to let?"

"She has."

"Then we will go with you, as I desire to get a nice apartment for my brother."

"Then come with me, and I will introduce you to my divine widow."

"Thank you very much," said Victor, "and we will go at once."

It was true that the little fellow had been invited to sup with the Widow Blanchard that night but he did not tell that the invitation came through Homer Balfe, who was really paying his addressee to the fair creature. The charming widow was very much amused by the little dwarf, and she pretended to be in love with him. Juliet Blanchard was a dark-eyed French beauty of nineteen, with all the spirit and humor of her people, and she had an excellent business, which was left to her by her old husband. That husband was the detective's oldest brother, and he only enjoyed six months of wedded life when he passed away to the better world. The police officer then sought to console the charming young widow by offering to take his dead brother's place, but Juliet laughingly replied:

"I fear your brother would be very angry and come out of his grave to haunt me if I should be so wicked as to wed his own brother."

The detective was a resolute man, and he did not give up at a first refusal. After some time spent in vain wooing, Blanchard found out that he had a rival in the fat, good-natured clerk employed in the war department, and he then made up his mind to look after Homer Balfe. Homer Balfe had already invited his two friends to supper at the young widow's house, and Victor Mau-

son had only addressed Mascot on the subject in order to puff up the vanity of the vain little fellow. The young widow received her admirer and his young friends in the most cordial manner, and she made a great ado about Mascot. The visitors were charmed at their reception, while Victor Mauson said to himself:

"I feel like a culprit in thus eating at the table of our fair enemy, while we are engaged in defeating her nation, but the Sons of the Sword are sworn to obey orders, and I am a mere instrument in the glorious work for the fatherland."

Mascot was in great glee at the supper-table, and he soon gave a glowing account of his encounter with Blanchard. A scream burst from the young widow as the door of the dining-room was burst open and Blanchard appeared before them. Fearful was the frown on the grim detective's face as he stared at those present for a moment or so, and then addressed the young widow, crying:

"And so you countenance treason against the emperor in your house!"

Before the young woman could reply Mascot was on his feet, and confronting the intruder, as he cried, in furious and excited tones:

"Brutal beast, how dare you intrude in our presence without an invitation? I will hurl you out of the window on the instant."

The daring little fellow did spring at the detective, and, clasping him around the waist, dragged him toward the window. Blanchard was so amazed at the sudden assault that he was dragged to the window by the powerful dwarf before he thought of offering any resistance. Just as they reached the closed window Blanchard roused himself and sent forth a fierce imprecation as he seized the dwarf in turn, and struggled to fling him aside, while he yelled:

"Miserable viper, you are doomed for this last outrage, and death awaits you."

The dwarf struggled manfully with the powerful man, as he cried:

"With limb or with weapon, vile beast, I will encounter you in behalf of the divine lady I adore, and Mascot will be your master."

Homer Balfe thought it was time for him to interfere, and he seized Mascot, crying:

"This struggle is not becoming before a lady, gentlemen, and I insist that you postpone your quarrel until the morning."

Mascot obeyed the order on the instant, and he sprang away from the detective, crying:

"Although you are a beast, I will fight you in the morning."

Blanchard scowled at all present, and then advanced to address the young widow, saying:

"I will have to report that you countenance treason against the emperor in your house."

"I will have to report that you stole into my house like a spy or a thief," she retorted.

"I have warrant for coming here, and I found the door below open."

"What is your warrant?"

The detective pointed to the dwarf as he answered in his sternest tones:

"To arrest that traitor."

"On what charge?" demanded the young man.

"On the charge of assaulting an officer of the government, and I will now bring a charge of

treason to the emperor against him, also. Little villain, you are my prisoner."

"Cowardly brute, you fear to encounter me in combat in the morning, and you take this means of evading the deadly struggle."

Then down the stairs darted the active little fellow, with the detective after him, crying:

"Surrender, you little hound, or I will shoot you down as you fly."

"Bah, you brute, I know that you dare not use a weapon!"

The young widow turned to Homer Balfe with a serious countenance, saying:

"I fear Blanchard will rush our little friend into serious trouble."

Hurried footsteps were heard on the stairs at the moment, and then into the room sprang the dwarf, as he cried:

"I have fixed the beast so that he will not trouble us again to-night."

"What have you done, Mascot?" demanded Homer Balfe in agitated tones.

"I upset him and flung him on his head in the street. He will not be sensible again for some hours to come at least."

They sat down to finish the supper, and Blanchard did not trouble them again. Blanchard swore vengeance against the young widow, Homer Balfe, and Mascot, and he at once made serious complaint about them all. He sought to arrest the dwarf on the following day, but the little fellow had disappeared. Homer Balfe lost his love that night, as the charming young widow became infatuated with the handsome young medical student, Victor Mauson, and she declared to herself that their lives would be linked together thereafter, for good or evil.

CHAPTER III.—At Their Real Work.

War was publicly declared three days after, and then the French people were in a frenzy of excitement. Louis Napoleon, Emperor of the French, led his armies toward the scene of action, and Frederick, then Crown Prince of Prussia, rode at the head of the Germans, under the guidance of the great Von Moltke. The first crash of arms was fearful, indeed; and intense was the consternation of the French when the terrible Prussian needle-gun mowed them down in thousands. The French were defeated at the great battles of Woerth and Gravelotte with great slaughter, although fighting like heroes on each occasion. The Germans then swept on toward Paris, and General Bazaine, at the head of the largest and best army in France, was ordered to defy the invaders in the strongly fortified city of Metz.

Over fifty thousand of the best soldiers in France were assembled in and around the famous old city, while other armies were forming elsewhere in haste to stay in the march of the invaders. The subject was discussed one evening in a large tavern in Metz, while the German armies were moving on the city. The discussion was at its height in the tavern when a stout young man, in the garb of a citizen, entered the public room and addressed a young French officer, saying:

"A word with you, Lieutenant Carnot."

The young officer thus addressed left the tavern

at once with the citizen, who drew him to a secluded spot out in the yard and whispered to him, saying:

"I have an important dispatch that must be delivered to-night."

"Then command me, Balfe, as I am on outpost duty to-night."

"My orders are simple. In an hour from now I will have ready for you a dispatch in cipher which must be delivered to our friends before midnight. The French are about to make an important movement in force."

"That is enough for me to know, brother," answered Fred Carnot. "Where will I meet you in an hour from this time?"

"Mascot will bring you the dispatch here. Do you know that Blanchard has arrived here from Paris?"

"I did not. What is the wretch doing here?"

"He is enlisted in the French secret service force, and I believe he requested to be sent here in order to have a chance to assail Madame Blanchard, Mascot, and myself."

Loud voices were heard in the tavern at the moment, and Homer Balfe said to the young officer:

"That is Mascot in a row with someone, and let us go in and see what the trouble is."

The two friends ran into the tavern, where they found Mascot engaged in a row with Blanchard, the former crying in furious tones:

"You ugly beast, I am not a culprit, and you cannot arrest me."

"You are a fugitive from Paris, and I have an order for your arrest, monkey."

"Let us see that order?" cried Lieutenant Carnot, as the two friends dragged Mascot away from the vengeful detective.

"I will not show my order to you, sir, but to the mayor of the city."

"Then bring the mayor here, as you cannot arrest my little friend without an order from him in person or in form."

The soldiers in the place applauded the opinion thus given by the young officer, and Blanchard retreated to the street muttering to himself:

"The wretches stick to each other like thieves, and there must be something in it. I was sent here to detect the traitors who are giving information to the enemy, and I will keep a close eye on the monkey and his friends of the club."

Blanchard hastened away to consult with his chief, who had full power to act against all German spies and French traitors. The detective was soon back at the tavern again, disguised as an old sergeant in the cavalry service. At the time appointed Mascot entered the tavern, and Lieutenant Carnot followed him out into the yard. The vigilant detective watched them with the eyes of a hawk. Fred Carnot soon hastened away from the tavern to report for duty, and the detective kept on his track. In less than an hour after the dashing young cavalry officer was leading a troop of his dragoons out on duty. Along with the troop rode an old sergeant from another regiment who had been consigned to act as a guide for the scouting party. That old sergeant was Blanchard, who had served in the dragoons, and who was perfectly familiar with the country around Metz. The troop pushed on for several miles without meeting any of the enemy, while the young officer said to himself.

"It will require bold work on my part to-night to throw this wolf off the scent, yet I will carry out my mission at all hazards, as I now perceive that I am under surveillance through the wretch."

On reaching the edge of a deep wood the French horsemen were startled by hearing a bugle blast. Then suddenly out from the trees rode a strong party of German troopers, the officer in command crying:

"They are Frenchmen, and on to the charge!"

Then on at the head of his troop rode the daring young Son of the Sword, and if he had been charging against the hated French he could not have displayed more bravery. By his side rode the detective, who was as brave a man as ever spurred on in a charge. Shots and cries rang out as the two troops drew together and then at it they went with the cold steel. The gallant young officer commanding the French troop fell at the head of his men, and then down from his saddle reeled the detective. The Frenchmen were defeated, slain and scattered, and their wounded young leader was taken prisoner. And so was the grim detective. Thus did the Sons of the Sword keep their pledges to serve fatherland in that great struggle between the giant powers of Europe.

CHAPTER IV.—Playing His Part.

Fred Carnot was struck on the forehead by a bullet, and he fell on the ground as if dead. Blanchard received a stunning blow from a saber that also stretched him senseless near the young officer he was spying on. The detective was the first to recover his senses, when he found himself a prisoner in the hands of the German troopers. On casting his eyes around he saw Lieutenant Carnot lying on the side of the road with his face covered with blood, and he said to himself:

"I was on the wrong track this time, as that young man is as true as steel. Well, now that I am in the hands of the Germans, I will see what I can discover, and then try my hand at making my escape."

A young German officer, who appeared to be about twenty-two years of age, bent over Fred Carnot at the moment, and he gave a slight start as he perceived a ring on his finger. The young German officer drew back from the insensible youth and stared around at five or six French prisoners just captured, as he cried to his men:

"Into the wood with the prisoner, and this officer lying here, as he is not dead."

The prisoners were marched into the wood, and Fred Carnot was raised from the ground by four of his countrymen. The young German officer walked by his side, as he muttered to himself:

"Dear Fred is playing his part nobly. I knew his voice as he charged against us, and I'll swear he has some important information, as he is a true Son of the Sword. We must be very cautious not to betray him to the prisoners."

When Fred Carnot opened his eyes the surgeon and the young German officer were kneeling beside him. After staring around for a moment Fred fixed his gaze on the young German officer and then gasped forth:

"Where am I?"

"With friends," was the whispered response from the German officer as he pressed the hand of his countryman.

Fred stared again at the speaker, and then looked at the surgeon as he inquired:

"Who is this?"

"One of us," answered the German officer. "You were wounded in the charge and you are a prisoner now. Fear not, dear friend, as the French prisoners taken cannot overhear us now."

A bright smile appeared on Fred Carnot's face, and he pressed his lips to those of the young German officer as he said to him:

"Dear brother, is it not strange that we should meet in this manner? I presume you were leading the other troop when we charged against each other."

"I was, dear Fred, and I recognized your voice in the charge. You had time to retreat, if you had not some purpose in view."

"Did you notice an old sergeant who rode close behind me in the charge, Frank?"

"I did, Fred, and he is a prisoner now."

"Where is he?"

"He is back in the wood here with five or six other prisoners taken in the fight."

Fred Carnot then ripped open the collar of his jacket with a pen-knife, and drew forth a sheet of thin letter paper, saying:

"This must be delivered to your commander at once, my dear Frank."

The German officer took the document and placed it carefully in his pocket, as he replied:

"It will be delivered at once. Now do you feel strong enough to move with me?"

"Yes, dear brother, I feel strong enough to move and to ride again, but I must be with the prisoners, as I have a difficult part to play."

"How is that, Fred?"

The young French officer hastened to tell about the detective, the surgeon moving away as the brothers conversed in subdued tones. When Fred Carnot had concluded he said to his brother:

"You now see that I must be with my men."

"I understand, Fred. I am Lieutenant Frank Wagner, of the German dragoons, and you are Lieutenant Fred Carnot, in the French cavalry service. We are strangers, but yet, as a prisoner on parole, I could show you some courtesy without exciting suspicion."

"I propose to refuse the parole you offer me, and take my place with the other prisoners. I will then plot with Blanchard for escaping back to Metz with him, in order to continue there my work as a Son of the Sword."

The young German officer sighed and pressed his brother's hand, as he said to him:

"And we may meet in battle again, dear Fred."

"You must do your duty, brother, and so must I. We in France are the watchers from the Rhine, and we must continue our work until this great struggle is over. Now lead me to the other prisoners, and see that the dispatch is placed in the hands of your commander at once."

The French prisoners were huddled together in a small hut when their young officer joined them. Fred Carnot had almost completely recovered from the effects of the wound he had received, and the sturdy detective was himself again. On entering the hut the young officer

drew the old sergeant aside and whispered to him, saying:

"I can perceive that our enemies are in possession of this wood, but they have not pushed far yet to the front. I have refused a parole, as I hope to escape."

"So do I, sir," answered the detective.

"Are you well acquainted with this wood?"

"Yes, sir, as I hunted here in my youth, as you must know that I am a native of Metz."

They then consulted as to the best means of escape, and the old sergeant suggested that they should dash out on their guards and make a bold push for it. The young officer consented to the proposal, as it suited his own purpose.

The guards outside the hut appeared to be on the alert, yet they were not prepared for the rush made out at them by the seven French prisoners. The dashing young lieutenant led in the rush, and down went one of the Germans who apposed him. The brave Blanchard was close behind the young officer, and he also succeeded in knocking down one of the armed guards before the man could use his weapon against him.

On through the wood rushed Blanchard and the young lieutenant, the former leading the way through intricate paths.

Fred Carnot and Blanchard reached Metz in safety about two o'clock in the morning.

The detective reported to his chief that Lieutenant Carnot was a true and a brave French soldier, and that his own suspicions were unfounded.

On the following day the French went out in force to attack the advancing Germans at a certain point. To the great surprise of the French general in charge of the movement the Germans met him on the march with an army far superior to his own, and the French were driven back on their fortifications with great slaughter. It was the cipher dispatch borne by Lieutenant Carnot that warned the Prussian commander of the French movement, and another mark was made to the credit of the Sons of the Sword. Three members of the secret orders were sent out from Metz on the same night, but Fred Carnot was the only one who succeeded in performing the important mission.

On the evening after the fight, Homer Balfe met Fred Carnot in the tavern again. The stout messenger complimented his friend on the success of his mission, and concluded by saying:

"I have secret information to the effect that Blanchard suspects us."

Balfe pondered a few moments, and then addressed his friend, saying:

"Think you that Blanchard will go out with you again disguised as an old sergeant?"

"I cannot say, Balfe."

"If he does and is taken prisoner, see that he does not get back here. This city will soon be in a state of siege, and then the Sons of the Sword will have to play an important part. It will not do for us to have the eyes of the suspicious fox on us, as he will watch us all the closer on account of hating me so much."

Some object in the street attracted the attention of the loungers in the tavern at the time, and the two friends moved to the window to look out. Several wagons bearing the wounded from the battlefield of the day passed along at the

moment, and Fred Carnot grasped his friend by the arm, as he gasped into his ear:

"Gracious me, do you perceive our dear young friend?"

"To whom do you allude, Fred?"

"To Victor Mauson. Do you not see him among the wounded in that wagon, and he looking as pale as death. He went out to-day with the army, and he must have been wounded on the battlefield while acting as a surgeon."

CHAPTER V.—The Widow and the Young Surgeon.

It was true that Victor Mauson had received a serious wound on the field of battle. The devoted young fellow marched out with the army that morning, and at night he was lying in one of the hospitals at Metz. Bending over him with tender eyes was the young French widow who had abandoned her gay life in Paris for his sake, and for love of country as well. All night did the young widow watch over the young surgeon, while his young sister also tended to him and to the other Prussian prisoners in the ward. Early on the following morning Juliet Blanchard was requested by the surgeon to retire from the ward. When the young widow paid a visit to her friend again she was shocked to discover that his left arm had been amputated. The devoted young woman then begged that Victor would return to Paris with her when he was able to travel, and she said to him:

"I have a home there for you, and I will guard and tend you while I live."

"I cannot accept your kind offer, but I will remember you while I live."

Homer Balfe called on the young surgeon on the following day, and advised him to retire from Metz as soon as possible, saying:

"This city will soon be in a state of siege, and you cannot be of any service while you are an invalid."

"You cannot tell of what service I may be, and I will remain at my post unless you give me prompt orders to the contrary."

The conversation was carried on in whispered tones, and so that the wounded men in the next cots could not overhear them. Homer Balfe left his friend soon after, as he said to himself:

"I have lost the fair widow now, as she will be certain to love him the more in his misfortune."

On the second evening after the battle, Blanchard was passing through the hospital for a purpose of his own, when he saw his sister-in-law bending over Victor Mauson. The detective started on the instant, as something in the manner and attitude of the young woman struck him like a revelation. Making an excuse to speak to one of the invalids near, the detective listened without being observed by Juliet or her maimed friend.

"My dear Victor," said the young woman, "it is reported that the Prussians will soon surround the city and then bombard it."

"Then they are advancing in force?"

"So it is said. Will you not return to Paris

with me to-morrow while we can? You have confessed that you loved me, and——"

"How could I help it?" interrupted the young surgeon, with a glowing smile.

"Then why not come with me, and I will be your wife. I will then have a right to nurse and care for you, and your sister will come with us."

"I do not think that my sister will consent to that arrangement."

"Why not, Victor?"

"Because there is an attraction here for her that is hard to resist."

"Can you tell me what that attraction is?"

"I think that she is very much attached to Lieutenant Carnot."

"If that is so I cannot ask her to return with us, as I know what love is too well. But you will consent to come with me?"

"Give me until the morning to think over that matter."

The young widow gladly consented, saying:

"I will make all preparations for our return in the meantime, as I know that you cannot refuse me, you noble fellow."

Although the lovers spoke in very subdued tones, the keen detectives heard every word uttered.

"And so Balfe has lost the prize and that beardless boy has won her love. I swear that he will never return to Paris with her, and Carnot will not win the young sister, either."

When Mabel Mauson, as she called herself at the time, arrived in Paris in boyish disguise, her intention was to return to Germany as soon as possible. The disguised girl remained at the young widow's house on that night of the meeting of the young Sons of the Sword. Early on the following morning her brother called on her, accompanied by Fred Carnot, and Mabel was still in her boyish disguise. On leaving the widow's house Victor Mauson confessed to his friend that his little brother was really his sister, and the young soldier laughed merrily, as he responded:

"That is not a secret to me, Victor, as I suspected as much."

The two friends then discussed the subject, and it was agreed to take the charming young widow into their confidence without betraying the fact that they were all Germans and engaged in such daring work. Victor Mauson told the young widow that his sister was compelled to leave her home in disguise to avoid marriage with an old man forced upon her by her parents. The vivacious young widow sympathized with the disguised girl at once, but she advised her to give up the disguise and wear suitable clothing, saying:

"I will protect you and give you a home here until you become reconciled to your parents."

Mabel accepted the offer, and remained with Madame Blanchard in proper attire.

When Madame Blanchard announced her intention of selling out her business and going as a nurse, Mabel proposed to accompany her. Thus it was that we find the two handsome young women in the city of Metz at a time when that stronghold was about to become famous in the great struggle.

Victor Mauson sent for Homer Balfe early on the following morning, and the maimed youth said to his friend:

"Dear Balfe, do you think that I could be of any service to our cause in Paris?"

"Yes, I do. Metz will fall, and then the Germans will push on into Paris."

"Then I will go to Paris; but I would like to tell you one thing now."

"What is that, my friend?"

"I love Juliet Blanchard, and I know that you are attached to her."

Homer Balfe sighed and smiled, pressing his young friend's hand as he responded:

"That is your good fortune, my dear boy, and I am the loser in the game of love. You have my best congratulations, and——"

"But is it right that I should wed one of the daughters of the enemy?" interrupted the young surgeon.

"That is for yourself to judge, but I would advise you not to marry until the war is over."

"Then I will take your advice."

It was then agreed that Mascot should accompany the lovers back to Paris, as Homer Balfe feared that the dwarf would get into trouble with the vengeful detective. It was agreed that the dwarf should meet them at a station outside the city that evening, and all preparations were made for the journey.

The young widow and Victor were not destined to leave Metz at that time, however. The German armies had advanced with great rapidity during the day, driving the French soldiers behind their fortifications, and in the evening the city of Metz was surrounded on all sides. Marshal Bazaine, with over fifty thousand men, was inclosed in the fortified city, and the great siege was commenced.

CHAPTER VI.—Mascot Plays His Part.

"Dear Victor, I am now glad that we were not permitted to go to Paris," said the young widow to her lover on the night of the third day after the siege had commenced.

"Why are you glad, Juliet?"

"Because I fear that you would never reach Paris alive, my beloved one."

The door was opened at the moment, and Homer Balfe entered with a flushed face and addressed the young widow, saying:

"Can you tell where I may find Mascot?"

"I'll bring him to you."

"I seek Mascot, as I want the little rascal to go on an important mission."

"Then something important is about to transpire?"

"I have positive information that the French propose to make a feint at one of the gates in the morning, and then move out in force at another."

"Would that I could go out to warn our brave countrymen of the movement."

"I have already sent out two of our faithful brothers, and propose to send Mascot, also."

At that moment the door was opened, and the young widow entered, followed by Mascot. After saluting his little friend, Balfe inquired:

"Have you seen anything of your friend Blanchard to-day?"

The dwarf grinned in a ferocious manner and then replied in savage tones:

"Yes, I saw the brute prowling around out in the street this evening, and I would have put a bullet through him if my dear divinity there would only permit me to get the rascal out of the way."

"Mascot," said Homer Balfe, "I wish to see you out in the hallway a moment."

On reaching the hallway Balfe whispered earnestly to the little fellow, who listened attentively, nodding his head the while. Having concluded his proposal, Balfe inquired:

"What do you say, Mascot?"

"I am ready, brother, is all that I can say."

The other then drew a small folded paper from his pocket and handed it to the dwarf, as he said to him:

"Put that in a safe hiding-place, and be certain to destroy it if you are taken."

"Fear not that I will succeed, brother, or I will die in behalf of fatherland."

About half an hour after the little fellow stole forth from the house. He was rigged up in the uniform of a drummer-boy, with the collar of his jacket pulled up as much as possible over his large head. As he was passing the tavern before mentioned, the detective stood at the door disguised as an old sergeant. A bright light was shining from the window of the tavern, and when Blanchard perceived the little fellow he fancied that there was something familiar about him. The dwarf saw the detective also, and he recognized him in his disguise, as he said to himself:

"The foxy brute may be on my trail now, but I will lead him a chase that will tire him out."

On through the streets went the little fellow, and on after him stole Blanchard.

On toward one of the gates the little fellow strode, whistling a lively air. Having received the password for the night from Homer Balfe, he had no difficulty in passing out from the city. Blanchard followed after, more than half in doubt as to the identity of the clever little dwarf, while he kept muttering to himself:

"If it is the fiendish monkey, what can he be doing going out toward the fortifications."

The French had thrown up extensive earthworks around the city, which were then occupied by a large portion of their army. Mascot strolled toward one of the earthworks, and Blanchard kept on his track with great caution, hoping that he was not detected in his game by the little fellow. But Mascot had his eye on the detective all the time, and he would mutter to himself:

"This is becoming very interesting. If I do succeed in reaching our friends outside, I must return again before morning."

As he glanced back on approaching the outer works he perceived that Blanchard was pushing after him, as if determined to come up with him at once.

"This will never do," said the little fellow to himself, as he suddenly darted into a deep trench which had been deserted by the French soldiers during the evening.

Blanchard did not perceive the little fellow at the moment, as the detective's attention was distracted from him while dodging a shell that swept over his head at the time.

The brave little fellow did encounter great peril that night before he succeeded in reaching the German lines. He accomplished his hazardous

mission, however, and Bazaine's army received a terrible repulse on attempting the projected movement on the following morning.

On the evening after the day of the battle, Homer Balfe was seated in the tavern, when Blanchard entered and approached him, saying:

"I have now a serious charge to make against that little mountebank whom you protect, sir."

"What charge have you to make against my little friend, sir?" demanded Balfe.

"I charge him with being a spy and in communication with the enemy."

"What proof have you of that, sir?"

"I saw him steal forth to the earthworks last night disguised as a drummer-boy, and he then disappeared in the direction of the enemy's line."

"Then, in that case, though I do not believe you," said Balfe, "he must be within the German lines now."

"I believe that the monkey is with the Germans, and I defy you to produce him, sir."

As if in answer to the defiance, Mascot sprang out from an inner room, and faced the detective, his eyes flashing with indignation, as he exclaimed:

"Vile, lying beast, I am here to prove that you are maligning a true Frenchman, and I will make you eat your words at the point of the sword."

CHAPTER VII.—The Forced Duel.

A shout of approval burst from the soldiers present, and Balfe cried.

"He must give you the satisfaction of a gentleman, my young friend."

"He must, he must," cried an old French officer, who believed in the code of honor.

"A duel, a duel," cried another.

Blanchard scowled in a savage manner, as he replied:

"Bah—I am not to be forced into a ridiculous duel to make a farce for you all. I accused that little monkey of being a spy, and I believe he is."

"You have failed to prove it, and if you pretend to be a gentleman you will give him satisfaction. If not, you are a coward."

Glaring fiercely around him, Blanchard turned as if to leave the tavern, when the soldiers blocked the way, the old sergeant crying:

"Prove the charge against the little fellow or kneel and beg his pardon. Martial law rules here now, and the sword must decide the issue, if you have no evidence against him."

Loud shouts of approval greeted the old sergeant's declaration, while three of the soldiers seized Blanchard at the same time. Making a violent effort, the enraged detective shook off the soldiers and advanced on Homer Balfe as he hissed forth:

"It is you who have forced this affair on me, and you will answer for it when I have punished this vile little reptile."

Balfe bowed to the detective as he answered in good-natured tones:

"I will be most happy to accommodate you, sir, when you have settled with my little friend, and I again assure you that he will defeat you in a fair encounter with the swords."

"Balfe, produce swords and out into the yard with us," cried the old sergeant.

The large yard at the back of the tavern was crowded with spectators when Blanchard and Mascot faced each other with the weapons, the old sergeant crying in serio-comic tones:

"Is this to be a duel to the death, my very valiant friend?"

Mascot glared fiercely at his enemy and waved his sword aloft as he cried:

"To the death it must be, unless he begs my pardon on his knees."

"On with the farce and then for the tragedy!" cried Blanchard, as he advanced to the attack with a smile on his stern face.

A burst of laughter arose from the spectators as the weapons clashed together. Blanchard was over six feet in height, and he was a muscular man as well. Mascot did not measure four feet in his vamps, and his head appeared to be the largest part of him. The little fellow's arms were almost as long as those of Blanchard, however, and the old soldiers present soon noticed that he held his weapon like one who had taken lessons in the art of fencing. Feeling the most utter contempt for his opponent the tall man merely struck at him in a playful manner, as he sneered forth:

"Brave hero, on which side of the body will I smite thee?"

"Where you can, brute."

As the little fellow made the reply, he commenced to dance around his opponent in the most playful manner, grinning the while like a fiend as he aimed blows at Blanchard's legs. The big detective then found that he had all he could do to guard his lower limbs, and he was not able to strike back at the little fellow.

"Did I not say that my little friend would vanquish his accuser?" cried Homer Balfe, as he clapped his hands with glee when he beheld Mascot dealing the detective a smart blow on the right leg.

Another tremendous round of applause greeted the performance, and Mascot drew back a moment and bowed to the audience, as he cried:

"I will soon bring the big brute to his knees before you all."

A terrible imprecation burst from Blanchard, and he sprang at the dwarf with his weapon uplifted as if to cleave him through and through, as he cried in fierce tones:

"Dog of a monkey, I will not spare you now!"

Mascot sprang aside and avoided the fierce blow, as he jeeringly replied:

"Spare me, great giant. If you are strong you should be merciful."

Even while the little fellow was speaking he struck the detective a very strong blow on the left leg. Another tremendous shout of applause burst from the audience, as they saw the tall man falling on his knees before the dwarf, who cried:

"Behold Gallath on his knees before David, and now to draw the fangs of the beast and to punish him in a royal manner."

As the little fellow spoke, he struck Blanchard on the arm before he could regain his feet, and the weapon fell from his grasp. The moment the kneeling detective was disarmed, Mascot raised

his sword over his victim's head, as he cried in tragic tones:

"The sword has declared my innocence, and by the sword my base accuser shall perish, as a warning to all knaves who accuse true Frenchmen. One minute for prayer, and then for death, thou vile beast who would wed my divine angel."

Fearing that the vindictive little fellow would put his threat in force, Homer Balfe sprang behind him and seized his sword-arm, drawing him back at the same time, as he cried:

"You must not disgrace yourself, my valiant friend, by slaying the vanquished."

The soldiers applauded the little fellow again, one of them crying:

"Death, or an apology!"

A commotion was heard in the tavern at the moment, and then out into the yard strode a fierce-looking officer, in the uniform of a marshal of France, as he cried in angry tones:

"What is the meaning of this uproar in here when the enemy assaults us outside?"

Mascot sprang before the officer on the instant, and saluted him, as he cried:

"Great Marshal Bazaine, I claim justice at the hands of the conqueror of Algiers!"

CHAPTER VIII.—Mascot and the General.

Bazaine cast his angry eyes around again as he sternly demanded:

"What is the cause of his uproar?"

Mascot stood before him as he replied in very dignified tones:

"It was an affair of honor, general. That wretch over there accused me of being a traitor and a spy, and I punished him."

"Who are you?"

"I am Mascot, general, assistant to Monsieur Balfe here, who you may remember."

Bazaine did remember Balfe, and he at once turned to him and demanded:

"Explain the cause of this disturbance, sir."

Balfe did explain in a very fair manner, and then continued, saying:

"My little friend then engaged his accuser in combat, and defeated him in a very gallant manner, general, as the soldiers present will testify."

Bazaine stared at Mascot and then at Blanchard, and a smile appeared on his stern countenance as he addressed the mortified detective and inquired:

"Is it possible, Blanchard, that you were defeated by this youth?"

"The treacherous monkey played tricks on me, general, when he knew that I would not punish him as severely as he deserved."

"Brave general," cried Mascot, in very indignant tones, "that is a false tale. The fact is, first, his utmost skill and strength, as the brave men who witnessed the combat will testify."

"I will not prolong to you a monkey, and I will declare that you are a good General Blanchard, who had some private dealings with Bazaine, and who partially betrayed what he overheard."

Even in the excitement of the late scene the keen detective, remembering certain incidents, had put together some clues tending to impress

him that both Mascot and Balfe were acting as spies for the enemy.

"What proofs have you?" asked Bazaine.

"General, I will present them to you very soon. In the meantime, I request that you place that little monkey in custody."

"And I protest against such an outrage, general," said Balfe. "That man is hounding down my little friend, who was an assistant of mine in the service, also, because of a private quarrel which occurred between them before the war commenced."

"The truth is, brave general," cried Mascot, "I had the felicity of winning the love of an adorable young widow to whom that wretch was also trying to aspire."

Bazaine was forced to smile again at the vanity of the ugly dwarf, and he then addressed Blanchard, and gravely asked:

"Is this true, sir?"

"It is the truth," said Mascot, "and here comes my charming divinity herself to verify my assertion, noble general."

The young widow did appear in the tavern yard at the moment, and her face wore an expression of deep dejection. Mascot sprang to her side, crying:

"Why is that cloud on the brow of my dear divinity, when her hero has been victorious in an encounter with the wretch who would persecute her with his vile attentions?"

"Dear Mascot, I know that you are a hero, and I am not at all surprised at your defeating anyone who would attempt to rival you in my affections. Monsieur Balfe, I wish to speak to you."

The young woman then retreated into the tavern, and Balfe followed her. Mascot then turned to Bazaine with a triumphant grin, as he inquired:

"Is that convincing proof that the fair creature adores me, general, and that she despises the ugly rascal there?"

"Quite convincing. Report to me in the morning, as I may desire to consult with you. Blanchard, this young person will remain at full liberty for the present, and I will hear what you have to say about him. We have spies and traitors in Metz, and they must be discovered very soon."

As Bazaine thus spoke he turned toward the tavern also, muttering to himself:

"The young widow is charming, but I have no time for flirtations now."

Blanchard followed the general into the tavern and cast his eyes around in search of the young widow and Monsieur Balfe. The detective then made some inquiries of the landlord, when he learned that Balfe and the young widow had proceeded to a private sitting-room on the second floor, and that they had ordered some wine. The young widow was very much agitated when she took a seat in the private room with her old admirer, who addressed her, saying:

"What agitates you, dear friend?"

"It is Victor. He's in a dreadful fever, and raves in a fearful manner."

"What does he rave about?"

"He raves in a fearful manner about some club or society, called the Sons of the Sword, or the Watchers from the Rhine, just as if he

were a German born, and acts as a spy here in France."

Speaking to the young woman in very subdued tones, Balfe then said:

"While I am certain it is nothing but the ravings of a disordered brain, we must not allow any strangers near Victor."

"What can we do about a doctor for the dear fellow, then?"

"I will away at once and get a friend of mine who will not prattle about our friend's innocent ravings. I will also send Mascot to assist you in watching over him."

The anxious young widow left the tavern soon after with Mascot, while Balfe hastened away in search of a young surgeon who was a member of the Sons of the Sword. As the young widow and Mascot hastened along the street, Blanchard followed them with a malignant smile on his face as he chuckled to himself and muttered:

"And so the young surgeon raves in his fevered sleep as if he were a German, and Monsieur Balfe has gone off for a doctor friend of his own. May perdition take me if I have not struck on a strange clue, and the beautiful creature will not be able to protect her young lover from my vengeance."

CHAPTER IX.—Working at His Clue.

Blanchard hastened away to consult with Bazaine, and to get full power from the general to act against those whom he suspected to be either spies or traitors. The detective commenced by telling about the secret meeting of the pretended social club in Paris, and he continued, saying:

"I watched them here in Metz, and I perceived Balfe, that little monkey, and a young lieutenant of the cavalry acting in the most suspicious manner."

"What is the officer's name?" inquired Bazaine.

"Carnot, general."

"Carnot, Carnot. If I mistake not, that is the name of a young cavalry officer who distinguished himself by great bravery in the affair to-day, and who received a serious wound."

"It is the same, general, and I must confess that he is brave."

Bazaine then inquired?"

"Have you seen anything suspicious since then?"

Blanchard then related his adventure with the pretended drummer boy on the previous night, and asserted:

"I am certain it was the little monkey I followed to the outer works."

"Then how can you account for his getting back here into the city again?"

"That has puzzled me, general, but I now remember that, as he is daring and cunning, he must have been inspired to make the venture back to the city so as to throw suspicion off his friends here and that he was aware that I was on his track."

Bazaine shook his head, and remarked:

"That would be venturesome."

"I made some inquiries about the little wretch in Paris, and I discovered that he is a German by birth, having been brought to France when he was about ten or twelve, by a French snow-man."

"That is an important point," remarked Bazaine, "taken in connection with the ravings of the young surgeon, and I will give you full authority to act in the matter, Blanchard."

Being thus empowered, the vindictive detective hastened away to work out his last clue against those he hated so much. Mascot was in great glee as he strutted along the street with the handsome young widow. On reaching the room where the invalid was lying, the dwarf was dumfounded on hearing him raving about the Sons of the Sword and fatherland, and he anxiously inquired of Juliet:

"Has anyone heard him raving such nonsense as that?"

"None but myself, and he terrified me so much that I locked the door here on him and went to see Homer Balfe about it."

Mabel Mauson entered the sick-room at the moment in a state of intense agitation and excitement:

"Oh, my dear friends, Lieutenant Carnot has been seriously wounded, and I have taken the liberty of bringing him here from the hospital."

"That was right, dear Mabel," responded Juliet, "and I will have a room prepared for him on the instant."

She left the sick-room on the instant, and the dwarf hastened to inform Mabel about the ravings of her delirious brother.

"Oh, Mascot, if that wretch Blanchard should hear of this it will be terrible, as he already suspects some of you."

"He has even accused me," responded the dwarf, "but I have baffled him. Let us not alarm ourselves, and I will watch your brother."

The wounded young officer was soon placed in a comfortable room, and Mabel watched over him. Homer Balfe arrived at the house soon after the young surgeon whom he had gone in quest of, and a powerful sleeping potion was given to the raving youth. At a secret meeting of the Sons of the Sword held in Metz that night, Homer Balfe told his brothers of the danger that threatened them. He also informed them that Blanchard had overheard the conversation between himself and the young widow in the private room of the tavern, and continued, saying:

"Blanchard then went and made a full report to Bazaine, who gave him full power to act against us."

"Then what is to be done?" inquired one of the devoted band.

After pondering for some time the stout leader said:

"The removal of Blanchard would only add to our danger and to the injury of the great cause. We must baffle the French and make him serve us."

Juliet then went on to explain the plan he proposed to adopt in dealing with the detective, and he hinted that he was in Blanchard's confidence. The young surgeon was sleeping calmly at the hour of midnight, and the young widow and Mabel were watching over him, when a loud knock was heard at the front door. Mabel hastened to the window to look out, saying to Juliet:

"I'll never see him if it is that Blanchard that is after me again; but I can only run now,

my adored one. Yes, it is the wretch, and he has three other brutes with him."

Juliet sprang to the window and demanded who was there.

"It is I, dear sister-in-law," responded Blanchard from the street.

"What do you seek at this hour, sir?"

"We seek a young person who is known as Victor Mauson."

"Victor Mauson?" gasped the young woman. "Why, he is an invalid and he is sound asleep at present. What do you seek him for?"

"To arrest him on the charge of being a spy for the Germans."

A terrified scream burst from the young widow, and she retreated from the window.

"Oh, Mascot, what are we to do? If Victor is removed now it will be fatal."

"Admit us at once!" yelled Blanchard, as he thundered at the door again.

The young woman faltered and Mascot whispered to her:

"Admit the brute, or he will force his way in, and trust me to baffle him, my adored one."

"Then open the door for them."

Mascot hastened downstairs and the young woman fell on her knees beside the sleeping youth as she muttered:

"Oh, Victor, Victor, is it possible that you can be one of the hated Germans?"

Blanchard soon strode into the room with three followers, as he cried out in loud tones:

"Victor Mauson, I have an order for your arrest, and you are charged with being a German spy."

The young woman saw what the fellow was aiming at and she drew a small pistol and presented it at his head as she hissed forth:

"Brutal monster, if you attempt to awaken my sick friend I swear that I will slay you."

CHAPTER X.—Mascot at Work Again.

Blanchard drew back on being thus confronted by the enraged woman, while Mascot advanced to her side, saying in sneering tones:

"Monsieur Blanchard is a very brave man. First he is defeated by one who is not half his size, and he now comes here with three as brave as himself to arrest a youth with only one arm."

"Silence, you monkey, and leave this room at once," thundered Blanchard, pitching his voice toward the sleeping invalid, as if hoping to awaken him and hear his mad ravings.

"Retire yourself, brute, and speak lower, or I will see this woman in bed," said Juliet, in subdued, but very emphatic tones.

Blanchard made a sudden movement and caught the young woman by the wrist, as he said:

"Enough of this folly. Ha! it is you who alarmed the prisoner now."

The weapon went off in the young widow's hand, and a loud report rang through the room. A surprised woman started from Juliet as she stepped with her arms outstretched for help at the bed at the same time. Mascot sprang at the detective, when two of the others seized him.

The little fellow struggled with the men in the most violent manner as he groaned forth:

"He is aroused now."

Blanchard had taken the pistol from the young woman, and he then advanced to the side of the bed as he cried in loud tones:

"Victor Mauson, I have an order for your arrest on a very——"

"Back, wretch," interrupted Juliet, as she seized the detective and hurled him from the bed with all the force she could command. The detective seized the young woman again as he cried to one of his men:

"Secure this young woman and take her out of here at once."

Juliet fought like a tigress as the men dragged her from the room.

Mascot struggled like a madman in the hands of the detective and the other officer as they dragged him from the sickroom also, while he cried:

"Perfidious brute, I will report you to General Bazaine for this vile treatment, and I will slit your nose for it hereafter."

"What is that disturbance about up there?" cried a voice from the street door.

"It is Bazaine," said Blanchard to his fellows in a low voice. And he then cried aloud:

"It is I, Blanchard, general, and I am arresting the spy you gave me orders about, while that little fiend of a dwarf is resisting."

Bazaine sprang up the stairs, as the street door was left open, and Juliet at once appealed to him in plaintive tones, crying:

"Oh, brave general, do not permit this wretch to disturb a noble young man, who has recently lost his arm in the service of his country, and who is as true to France as you can be yourself."

"Your young friend will not be molested, madame, I can assure you."

"The brute has made me a prisoner also, brave general," cried Mascot, "after you had ordered him not to molest me."

Bazaine scowled at Blanchard as he demanded in severe tones:

"How dare you disobey my order, Blanchard?"

"The little wretch attacked me, general, while I was obeying your orders in reference to the young surgeon, and I was forced to place him under arrest."

"Then release him on the instant, and do not molest him again without a special order from me."

He then turned and dismissed the baffled detective, saying:

"I will see that your wounded prisoner does not escape, and you will await further orders from me in regard to him."

Blanchard retreated down the stairs in a great rage. Mascot hastened into the room to his sick friend, and Juliet placed refreshments before Bazaine in the parlor. Bazaine had two objects in visiting the young widow's house that night. In the first place he was anxious to get a fairer view of the charmer himself. Then he wished to consult with Mascot on a very delicate subject. After spending a very pleasant half hour with Juliet, Bazaine requested to have a private interview with Mascot. Mascot soon appeared before the grim general with a con-

fident grin on his ugly countenance, as he remarked in dignified tones:

"You desire to consult with me, General Bazaine?"

"Yes, I wish to have a talk with you on a certain subject of interest to me."

"As regards defending the city, I may presume, brave general."

"It is as regards leaving the city, my little friend and drummer-boy."

"I do not understand you, general."

"You left the city last night disguised as a drummer-boy, and I am aware of it. If you dare deny it I will have you put to death on the instant."

The brave little fellow glared at his confident accuser for a moment, and he then sprang suddenly at him and flung him on the floor, as he hissed forth.

"You will die before you can put me to death on a false charge, tyrant!"

CHAPTER XI.—Mascot on a Mission.

Bazaine was so amazed at the sudden attack of the daring dwarf that he did not think of resistance or shouting for help until he found himself on the floor with the little fellow's muscular hands clutching his throat. A man rushed into the room at the moment, and seized Mascot by the arms as he cried:

"You little demon, I will have to kill you yet for your folly."

The speaker was Homer Balfe. Flinging the dwarf aside, he continued:

"Out of the room at once, or I will have your blood on my hands."

Mascot cast one glance at the prostrate general, and then left the room, crying:

"He accused me of having played the spy for the Germans last night, and even the emperor himself cannot accuse Mascot of such a crime with impunity."

Bazaine soon regained his feet, and he then glared at Balfe as he demanded:

"Where is that bad Mountebank?"

"He has fled in terror of his mad act, general, and I deeply regret——"

"Has the mountebank left the house?"

"I think not, general, as I ordered him to wait on my sick friend."

"Where and when did you first meet that little fellow, Balfe?"

"I picked him up in the streets of Paris about a year ago, general."

"What do you know of his early history?"

Balfe then gave an account of Mascot, stating, however, that he was born on the French side of the Rhine and not far from Strasburg.

"Will you bring the little mountebank in here to me again?"

"Certainly, general."

Balfe found the dwarf in the sick-room, where he was giving Juliet a glowing account of his encounter with the great general. Balfe whispered earnestly to the little fellow for some moments, and concluded by saying:

"I feel that we are all in extreme danger, and I trust that you will obey me to the letter in the interview with Bazaine."

Balfe then led the dwarf before Bazaine. Bazaine glared at him for a few moments in very piercing manner before he demanded:

"What is your real name?"

"Mascot, general."

"What was your father's name?"

"Peters, sir."

"Where were you born?"

"About five miles above Strasburg, on the French side of the Rhine."

"Why did you make that sudden assault on me?"

"Because I was seized with a frenzy, general, and that Blanchard has almost driven me mad with his false accusations."

Bazaine smiled in a grim manner. He then addressed the young widow, who had entered the room, saying:

"Young lady, I will depart now, and I beg to assure you again that Blanchard will not annoy you or your friends in the future."

The stern soldier then strode along the street, accompanied by Mascot, muttering to himself:

"What strange instruments are placed in our hands in this tremendous game of life. This mountebank may be the means of crushing Louis Napoleon and harling him from the throne of France."

On reaching the hotel, Bazaine led Mascot up to his private sitting-room, and addressed him in somewhat kindly tones, saying:

"Can you keep a secret?"

"I have kept several, sir."

"Your father's real name, for instance?"

Mascot started a little, and replied:

"How could you know that, sir?"

"I know more than that, and I can tell you that you were born on the German side of the Rhine, while the name of your adopted father was not Peters, but Paul."

"Perhaps you can tell me who my real father was, general?"

"I can. He was a young lieutenant in the French army."

"Can you tell me his name, sir, and if he is alive at present?"

"I can tell you his name, and he is alive at present; but let me first know if I can give a correct outline of your history."

"Pray, proceed, general," said Mascot, who was becoming intensely excited.

"Your mother was a German peasant girl," commenced Bazaine, "and she fell in love with a young French officer who was over in Germany on a leave of absence at the time. The consequence was a private marriage, the young officer marrying under the name of Tournay, so that your mother was never aware of his real name."

"That was the name the rascal married her under, general," remarked Mascot, "and I am surprised that ever at the correct information furnished by Bazaine. Can you tell me his real name?"

"His real name was Bazaine, and I am the young officer and your father, unfortunate son."

Mascot sprang to his feet and stared at Bazaine in a fearful manner. He then clenched his hands and shook them in the general's face as he exclaimed, in angry tones:

"If you speak the truth, you are a vile traitor, and I hate you."

The stern soldier smiled at the rage of the little fellow, and he then said, in very earnest tones:

"One year after I married your mother I was ordered away to Algiers, from whence I sent her all the money I could spare. Two years after arriving there I received information from her father that she was dead. The next information I received was to the effect that you had been adopted by a cousin of your mother's named Paul, and that I would not be troubled any further about you."

Mascot grinned again in a hideous manner, and then remarked:

"I presume that the great General Bazaine will not be very proud of his son."

"On the contrary, I am proud of your courage and your strength, and I beg you will believe me when I say that I have sought you for years past."

"With what object, sir?"

"To have you near me as a friend and companion. Will you accept the offer, Mascot?"

The dwarf pondered some moments with his head resting on his breast, as he said to himself:

"I will accept his offer, as it will enable me to serve the Sons of the Sword all the better."

Blanchard was enraged on the following morning, when he learned that Bazaine had taken the horrid little dwarf under his protection.

About a week after the little fellow was installed in his new position Homer Balfe received a visit from him in the tavern, when Mascot whispered into his friend's ear, saying:

"I am going on an important mission."

"Where to?"

"Into the German lines."

Balfe seized the little fellow by the arms, as he demanded in excited but subdued tones:

"Who is sending you there?"

"General Bazaine himself."

CHAPTER XII.—Blanchard after Bazaine.

"Tell me what you can about it, then," Balfe said.

"There is not very much to tell as yet. About an hour ago he called me into his select private apartment, and asked me if I could undertake a dangerous mission in his behalf. I answered in the affirmative, and he then asked me if I could manage to get into the German lines in secret."

"I hope you did not at once say that you could, my wise brother."

"I was not such an idiot as all that," responded the vain little fellow, with a disdainful glance at his friend. "I told him that it would be a very difficult affair, yet that I was willing to venture on the mission in his behalf."

"Then when are you to set out?"

"This very night I am to receive a small document from the general, and he is to aid me in passing our lines without exciting suspicion against himself. Can you imagine that I have not a single word to say to you about this?"

"The expression of your face tells me you are from every one."

France, and I saw you in company with a spy to-night, sir, out on the outer lines before the enemy."

Bazaine made a sudden bound forward, drawing a dagger at the same time.

"Dog of a spy, it is thus I serve such creatures as you are!"

A groan burst from Blanchard, and he fell on the ground as if dead. After assuring himself that his victim was dead, Bazaine stole along the deserted street. When Bazaine disappeared down the street, another man stole out of a doorway in the neighborhood, and approached the fallen detective, muttering:

"What a glorious night for the Sons of the Sword, and our enemies are doing our work as well as we could do it ourselves."

The speaker was Homer Balfe. Bending down over the fallen detective, the German continued to mutter:

"He is our persistent enemy, but I cannot see him perish if he yet lives, and he will serve us alive hereafter."

The wounded man opened his eyes at the moment, and stared up at Balfe, saying:

"Will you assist me?"

"With pleasure, and I deeply regret to see you thus wounded, Monsieur Blanchard."

"I may repay you yet."

The wounded man was taken to the young widow's house soon after, and those who bore him there were Sons of the Sword.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Traitor's Work.

Early the following day the French troops in the city and outside were drawn up in line of battle. The brave fellows and the gallant officers over them were in high glee, as they felt certain that a decisive movement was about to be made. Then a wild rumor of rare rage through the ranks, many officers were heard cursing forth some imprecations, while several of them broke their swords across their knees, as they exclaimed:

"Treachery, treachery! The infamous Bazaine has betrayed us to the enemy without striking a blow for honor and for France!"

Blanchard acted like a hopeless maniac when informed of the consummation of Bazaine's treachery, and he exclaimed:

"May justice strike me for not slaying him when he was out in the trenches last night with that little demon of his. Oh, why did I not denounce him openly before he could conclude his negotiations with the accursed Germans!"

At that moment the chief of police was announced, and Blanchard recognized the man. Addressing the officer in steady tones, the detective said to him:

"I wish to denounce the wretch who attempted to assassinate me, sir."

"Do you recognize him?"

"I did. He is a little venomous mountebank who is known as Mascot, and he is lying wounded in the next room now."

Homer Balfe was listening to the false accusation, and he sprang forward on the instant, as he cried in indignant tones:

"Lying wretch, I can prove that Mascot was lying wounded in this house when you were wounded. There is more in this than I can discern at present, and the wretch must be playing at some deep game."

Perfect order reigned in Metz on the following evening when Homer Balfe sallied out in search of Bazaine. The treacherous general had kept himself out of the way during the day, and it was reported that he was already on his way to Germany as a prisoner. Balfe had correct information, however, and he was aware that the miserable man was living in strict retirement and in disguise at the house of a certain official in the city. On reaching the street where the official lived, Balfe noticed an old man approaching him, who had a peculiar gait or stride. After watching the old stranger for some moments Balfe turned and followed him as he said to himself:

"I believe that is Bazaine himself, and where can he be going in that disguise?"

Brimful of curiosity, Balfe turned and followed the disgraced soldier along the streets, and he was quite surprised to see him stop at the young widow's house and enter there. The young widow soon appeared in the hallway to receive her visitor. Homer Balfe kept in the background, and he saw Juliet leading the disguised general into the parlor, as she said to him:

"I do not know you, sir, but if you are a friend of Mascot's I am glad to see you."

When they had entered the parlor Homer Balfe stole up to listen at the door. On entering the parlor Bazaine looked cautiously around before he addressed Juliet in his natural tones, and inquired:

"Can I confide in you, my dear young lady, and speak freely to you?"

"What is your business with me, sir?"

Bazaine shrugged his shoulders again, and flung himself on a chair as he replied:

"I came to inquire about Mascot."

"Are you aware that he has been arrested on a very serious charge?"

"I heard something about the matter this evening, but I cannot understand it."

"It is plain enough, sir. Blanchard accuses Mascot of having stabbed him in the street on the second night before the unhappy day on which you surrendered Metz to the Germans."

Bazaine then inquired:

"Where is Blanchard now?"

"He has been removed to the hospital."

"I must see Mascot at once and alone," said Bazaine in emphatic tones.

"If the officers will consent that you see him alone, I will lead you to his room."

"They will consent, as I have an order here from the chief of police."

Homer Balfe retired from the door before Bazaine came out with Juliet, and the watchful man was more puzzled than ever at the turn of affairs. The order held by Bazaine was authentic, and he was seen standing alone at the doorway of his son.

"My dear boy, what about this serious charge against you?"

"Oh, that is nothing, as Blanchard is raving when he makes it."

"But why not state the truth as to where you were that night, and call on me to prove it?"

Mascot cast a peculiar glance up at the speaker as he said:

"Are you willing to tell the truth as to what happened that night, sir?"

"Certainly, in order to save your life."

"Then I am not willing to save my worthless life by exposing you, sir," replied the brave little fellow, "and I defy Blanchard to prove it was I who stabbed him, the lying beast."

"Do you know who stabbed him?"

"I do, as a friend of mine witnessed the deed that night."

Bazaine started, and then gasped forth in whispered tones:

"Then why does not that friend come forward and testify in your behalf?"

At that moment a side door in the bedroom opened, and Homer Balfe stood before them.

Addressing Bazaine in subdued but firm tones, the young German said:

"General Bazaine, I witnessed the affray the other night, and I insist on your baffling Blanchard by telling the truth."

CHAPTER XV.—Their Work Was Not Over.

Bazaine put his hand to his breast as if in search of a weapon, as he exclaimed:

"I cannot do anything with Blanchard, as he is now my deadly enemy. Can you not aid Mascot in effecting his escape from this house, and I will aid him in passing out through the German lines?"

"That will not do," answered Mascot, as he cast a peculiar glance at Balfe.

Balfe returned the glance as he responded, saying:

"Mascot does not desire to have the charge hanging over him, as he intends to return to Paris with me."

Bazaine grasped his son's hand as he said:

"I can give you a happy home in Germany or in Spain, my dear son."

"I am compelled to decline your offer, sir, as I will cast my lot with the man who befriended me in my hour of need."

The unfortunate man then turned to Balfe,

"You keep my secret, and I will hasten at once to bafflè Blanchard."

Homer Balfe only replied by a cold bow, and he then turned to retreat by the private door. Bazaine then turned to embrace his deformed son again, saying:

"We may never meet again, Mascot, and I hope that you will think of me with charity."

"I will, sir."

After receiving the secret from Balfe, Mascot went forth in his disguise, Carnot reporting that Blanchard was not in the vicinity.

The brave little fellow was meeting his way

Blanchard could prove that Mascot had acted for Bazaine in his treachery, but it was known that the detective hated the little fellow, and it could be proved that he had made a false charge against him also. The detective was in a delirious state when he made that charge, as the surrender of Metz had so affected his brain as to retard his curse, if not to seriously endanger his life.

He raved like a maniac for three days and nights, denouncing Bazaine as his assassin as well as a traitor to France, and he also asserted that the dwarf was the traitor's son and tool. When the vindictive man recovered his senses, Balfe confronted him, and asserted that his assailant was a tall French officer, and that Mascot was lying wounded in the young widow's house at the time of the assault.

Mascot was released from prison that day, and he was received with open arms by the charming widow, who was not aware that he was Bazaine's son. Three days after that Blanchard was so far recovered as to be able to make his escape from the hospital and out of the city.

Homer Balfe returned to Paris to report at the war office there, only to find everything in the greatest state of confusion. Bazaine was denounced on all sides as a traitor, and the French generals were making frantic efforts to muster armies and stem the tide against the German invaders. Mascot entered the city in a clever disguise, and he took up his quarters in the young widow's house, as he said to her:

"I will be here to nurse my friend and to guard you against that beast Blanchard if he appears here to molest you again."

One evening Homer Balfe entered the widow's house, and drew Mascot out into the hallway to whisper into his ear:

"Great news, my friend."

"What is it, then?"

"In the first place, Blanchard is in Paris again, and looking for you."

"That is nothing, as I can defy the beast in this disguise. What is the great news you have to tell me, my brother?"

"The French have received an overwhelming defeat at Sedan, Marshal McMahon has surrendered his whole army, and he is a wounded prisoner."

"That is glorious news for the Sons of the Sword, but what about the French emperor who was with his army?"

"He is a fugitive in Belgium or Switzerland."

"Hurrah for that. And now our friends will soon be thundering at the fortification of Paris."

After the crushing defeat of the French at Sedan the Germans advanced on Paris, defying all attempts to stay their march. The terrible revolution then burst out in all its fury, to be followed by the siege laid by the German army.

One evening Balfe addressed Mascot, saying:

"We are getting out of provisions, and it would be well if you would go forth to-night to seek some. I will give you a secret dispatch to our friends also."

After receiving the message from Balfe, Mascot went forth in his disguise, Carnot reporting that Blanchard was not in the vicinity.

The brave little fellow was meeting his way

through Paris when three men suddenly sprang on him, one crying:

"Seize the old hag, and drag her under the light until we see who she is."

The speaker was Blanchard, and Mascot recognized his voice on the instant.

CHAPTER XVI.—The Sons in Danger.

Mascot struggled like a little demon when the three met set on him. Blanchard and one of the others closed in at the moment, and the large handkerchief was torn from Mascot's head. A street lamp was burning near the scene of the encounter, and by its light the detective recognized the peculiar head of his little enemy. With a yell of rage and surprise the powerful man dealt the little fellow some furious blows on the head, as he cried:

"And so you are here at your old tricks again, you little demon?"

The furious blows sent Mascot to the ground again, and he was soon secured and bound as a prisoner by the three men. The little fellow attempted to make away with the secret dispatch, but he had retained it too long after the first attack. Blanchard was in great glee over his capture, and he dragged the little fellow along toward the nearest station-house, as he hissed into his ear:

"Your treacherous father cannot save you now, you infernal monkey, and I will have him put to death yet for his vile treachery."

On reaching the station-house the little fellow was searched, and the secret dispatch was found sewed up in the lining of his old dress. Blanchard examined the dispatch very carefully for some time, and submitted it to the official in charge of the station-house also. He then turned on Mascot and demanded:

"Who gave you this?"

"That must have been in the old dress when I bought it."

"I think I know who can decipher this writing, and we will take this treacherous little monkey along with us."

The handkerchief was tied on the dwarf's head again, and he was led away under a strong guard, Blanchard in front.

"If I am not mistaken we shall make some nice discoveries to-night."

Blanchard, Victor Mauser, and Homer Balfe were seated together in the young widow's room, and there all bore traces of the fearful suffering that endured by the citizens of Paris. They were smoking about the stove and the fearful flames of the great chimneys who held control of the city. Suddenly a heavy rap was heard at the door, and then Blanchard stood before them, with a grim smile on his sinister countenance. After turning to the young widow and to Victor Mauser, the detective addressed and addressed Homer Balfe, saying:

"I presume that you have had a good deal of experience with ciphers and secret documents in the war office, Monsieur Balfe? Perhaps you can decipher this document for me."

"I will examine it with pleasure, sir."

Balfe then proceeded to examine the secret

cipher by the light of the lamp as he remarked:

"The characters are not known to me, but I may detect them if I had a clue."

"What clue would you require?"

"It would be necessary to know who the writing was intended for."

Another grim smile appeared on the detective's face, and he answered:

"I can only tell you that the paper was found secreted in the dress of an old woman ragpicker, whom we discovered attempting to make her way out toward the German works."

"Then why did you come to me with the document, sir?" inquired Balfe in somewhat dignified tones.

The young woman started on hearing about the old woman, as she was well aware that Mascot went out in such a disguise for the purpose of procuring provisions for the house. The detective noticed the young woman's start of surprise, and he fixed his keen eyes on her as he inquired:

"Do you know anything about this old woman, my dear sister-in-law?"

"What could the lady know about her?" interposed Homer Balfe.

Another grim smile appeared on the detective's face as he answered:

"As we happened to trace the old wretch from this house it is supposed that she would know something about her."

He then turned to the door and called aloud:

"Bring in the prisoner."

Two of the officers entered the room dragging the disguised dwarf with them, and Homer Balfe could notice several other armed men out in the hallway. Blanchard dragged the prisoner before the young widow, as he inquired:

"Dear sister-in-law, do you know this old creature?"

Before the embarrassed widow could reply to commit herself the brave dwarf cried out, speaking in his natural tones:

"Madame Blanchard knew nothing about my going out in his disguise, you beast."

"But she sheltered you here, and she is implicated with you in treason against the republic. You are all spies and traitors here, and I arrest you. In with you, friends, and seize them."

A cry of terror escaped from the young widow as she turned her loving eyes on Victor Mauser, knowing full well that such an accusation was speedily followed by death in Paris at the time.

CHAPTER XVII.—For Life or Death.

A powerful man entered the room, and he addressed the young widow.

"Bring them all down to the court."

The young widow, Victor Mauser, and Homer Balfe were then taken to the court, where they were seated in the front of the hall. The judge of the Sons of the Sword was seated on his throne, and he asked the young widow how she felt. She answered that she felt very nervous, and the judge told her that she was not alone. He then asked her if she knew the man who was arrested, and she answered that she did not. The judge then asked her if she knew the man who was arrested, and she answered that she did not. The judge then asked her if she knew the man who was arrested, and she answered that she did not.

that he could rely on him to the death. Returning the pressure without being perceived by the other officer, Balfe looked around at the other prisoners, as he remarked:

"This is a vile outrage, and my friends at the war office will avenge me."

"Are you employed at the war office?" inquired the friend at his side.

"I am, and I am well known as an ardent friend of the republic."

They were passing a dark street at the moment, and Balfe felt a tug at his arm. Taking the hint on the instant, the prisoner broke away from the two officers and darted into the dark street, crying:

"I will not submit to this infamous outrage!"

The friendly officer was the first to dart after him, crying:

"I will run the wretch down!"

Blanchard did not join in the pursuit, as he was keeping watch over Mascot, while he said to himself:

"I can seize that fellow again if he does escape now, as he cannot get out of Paris."

When the prisoners reached the station-house Blanchard made formal charges against them, and they were placed in separate cells. The friendly officer who had aided Balfe's escape soon returned to the station-house to report that the prisoner had succeeded in getting away. Blanchard then sent out several men in quest of Homer Balfe, and he sallied forth himself on the same mission.

The grim detective had succeeded in gaining a position as chief of the police during that period of anarchy and starvation. At twelve o'clock that night Fred Carnot was relieved from duty on the fortifications. The young officer was hastening to his lodgings when he encountered one of his friends, who informed him of the arrest of Mascot and the others and the escape of Balfe. The friend continued, saying:

"Hasten with me to a meeting of the Sons of the Sword, as we must strike a blow for life or death to-night."

As they hastened along to the rendezvous, Fred Carnot was delighted to hear that Mabel Mauson was not arrested with his other friends. The devoted Young German girl was acting as a nurse in one of the hospitals in Paris that night, and she thereby escaped from the clutches of the vindictive detective. The Sons of the Sword met that night in an old building situated not very far from the residence of the young widow. Homer Balfe was the presiding genius, and he soon adopted a plan for the rescue of their friends. Messengers were sent to different parts of the city in great haste, to summon other members of the secret order, and the word given to all was:

"Assemble near the station-house as members of the mob to strike for life or death."

About three o'clock in the morning over a hundred desperate-looking characters assembled before the station-house, and demanded that the German spies should be given up to them for punishment. Blanchard was terrified for the safety of the beloved young widow, and he attempted to resist. But he was flung aside with great force, his assailants trampling over him as they rushed into the station-house, and forced

the other officers to unlock the cells where the prisoners were confined. The young widow screamed with terror as she was dragged forth, but a friendly voice soon whispered into her ear, saying:

"Be not alarmed, dear lady, as friends outside will protect you."

The speaker was Homer Balfe, and the leader of the Sons of the Sword appeared like a desperate rough at the time. Mascot and Victor Mauson were also dragged forth from their cells and rushed out into the street. Then away from the station-house went the howling mob, dragging the prisoners with them. Blanchard stood at the door, groaning in agony from the bruises he had received, and grinding his teeth with rage, as he said to himself:

"I see through their game now, and my sister-in-law will not suffer death at their hands to-night."

The keen-eyed detective had recognized the leader of the mob, and Fred Carnot also.

Blanchard recognized Mascot and Victor, and sprang at Mascot and seized him by the arm. The dwarf turned on his assailant, but the soldiers sprang at him and hurled him to the ground, while Blanchard continued:

"Little demon, you cannot escape me this time."

CHAPTER XVIII.—Condemned as a Spy.

When he recovered again, Mascot found that his arms and legs were secured in the most effective manner, and he was lying on the floor in the guard-house. On glancing around the dwarf saw Blanchard standing near him with another cipher message in his hand, and which he was endeavoring to make out by the light of a lamp. Blanchard then drew the first cipher from his pocket and compared the two as he muttered aloud:

"They are written by the same person, and they were intended for the German. Who can be the traitor working with the little demon?"

Blanchard then bent down over the little fellow and felt his pulse, as he kept grumbling:

"I see that he is not dead, and I think he is playing the fox with me."

The detective then sprang suddenly out of the apartment, but he soon returned with a bucket of water, as he cried:

"Arouse yourself, little demon, as your shamming will not save you to-night."

Even while he uttered the words the rough man dashed the water over the little fellow's face. Mascot gasped for breath for some moments, and then opened his eyes and growled forth:

"You cruel wretch, why not put me to death at once and cease this torture?"

"Will you confess that you are a German spy?"

"I do not confess anything, and you cannot prove that I am."

Blanchard stamped his foot in rage and drew the cipher messages from his pocket, as he cried:

"These are sufficient to condemn you, and you will die the death of a spy. I will take you before the military tribunal now, and your trial will be short and final."

Calling on some of the soldiers to assist him,

Blanchard then dragged the prisoner along until they had reached a tavern, where some of the insurgent leaders were holding a meeting at the time. After making a formal charge against the prisoner Blanchard stated that he had caught him attempting to leave the French works on two occasions, with the intention of passing into the German lines. The accuser drew the cipher messages from his pocket also, and presented them to the judges, saying:

"While I cannot make these out, I am certain that they are intended for the German commander outside, and that they have been written by a traitor in this city."

He then told about his adventures at Metz, when Mascot was sent over into the German lines by Bazaine, and then demanded:

"Is it not true that your mother was a German peasant girl, and that your father is the infamous traitor known as General Bazaine?"

Fierce cries of rage burst from those around on hearing the question, and Mascot felt that his doom was sealed if the Sons of the Sword did not soon come to his rescue. Disdaining to answer the questions put to him, the brave little fellow scowled again at Blanchard and cried:

"Infamous wretch, you put that question to me knowing that a denial on my part would not be believed. I mean to answer you, and I defy you to mortal combat, as I have beaten you before when your life was only spared by the intervention of General Bazaine. I have defeated you on foot and with the sword, and that is why you hate me."

The Sons of the Sword met again that night in the old building formerly mentioned, when they received important tidings from their friends outside the city. The commander of the regular French troops outside the city was about to make an attack on the insurgents on the following morning, and the Germans were to assist him. If that attack were successful poor Mascot might be saved, yet Homer Balfe and his friends did not care to risk the life of their brave little friend in the attack. In the meantime Blanchard had his eyes on every direction looking for Homer Balfe, Victor Mauson, and the young woman. One of those spies went to the hospital where Fred Carot was lying, and he returned to report that Mabel Mauson was watching over her lover there.

The wildest excitement prevailed in Paris that night, as the half-savvy insurgents had learned that their countrymen outside would attack them in great force in the morning. An attack was made on the place where Mascot was confined, but it was repulsed and the police there were kept busy at their usual duties. One of his spies then brought the detective word that Homer Balfe and several of his friends had taken refuge in an old warehouse not far from the prison.

Calling a company of the officers of the prison, the men of the law set out to capture the men of the sword. They were not far from the prison when they met the Sons of the Sword.

CHAPTER XIX.—True to the Deed.

Among one of the Sons of the Sword were a number of the old soldiers of the revolution. These men were not far from the prison when they met the Sons of the Sword.

himself, fearing that Blanchard or his spies would arrest him, and it was all important that the leader of the secret society should be at liberty at the time. Victor Mauson was in very delicate health, as he never recovered from the loss of his arm, and the faithful young widow spent most of her time in watching over him.

Soon after daybreak all the inmates of the old building were aroused by a fearful cannonading at the outworks, and they all felt that the great attack had commenced. Messengers were again sent out to learn the news, and one of them soon returned to inform Homer Balfe that Blanchard was moving that way with a strong force of police.

"We must stand together, friends," said Homer Balfe, who felt that Blanchard would sacrifice them all at that important crisis. The words were scarcely uttered when Blanchard entered the building with a dozen of his armed followers as he cried:

"Shoot down anyone who attempts to escape from this place, and arrest all present. I have men stationed outside, and resistance will be useless."

Homer Balfe saw that the moment had come for the Sons of the Sword to make a decided stand, as he knew that the detective and his friends would show him no mercy in the terrible scenes that must ensue on that morning in the streets of Paris. Springing to the side of the young surgeon and in front of the woman he loved, he drew a revolver and aimed it at Blanchard, as he cried:

"Friends of law and order, I call on you to defend yourselves against this wretch and his companions. Resist to the death, and you will be avenged."

"Down with the traitors," yelled Blanchard, as he sprang at Homer Balfe, pistol in hand. "Spare the young woman, but put the others to death."

The stalwart man was then attempting to force his way through the Sons of the Sword, and he had seized the young widow by the arm when Victor Mauson fired at him, crying:

"I will defend the young lady to the death."

Uttering a cry of pain, Blanchard staggered back, while his friends rushed on, using their muskets in striking down some of them who opposed them.

"Fire at the wretches," cried Balfe, as he discharged his own weapons in quick succession.

Blanchard pointed his weapon at the young surgeon, as he cried, in fierce tones:

"You will not survive me to wed the woman I love better than life."

A piercing scream burst from the young widow as her young lover fell back in her arms, with a fatal wound in his breast. Homer Balfe aimed his weapon at Blanchard and fired, as he cried:

"Infamous wretch, you have slain my friend, but you will die with him."

Blanchard did fall to the floor, uttering another fearful groan, while the young widow bent over her lover, as she cried, in thrilling tones:

"My dear young friend, you are wounded to death and are dying. Oh, misery, misery, what a dreadful morning this is."

The young surgeon pressed the young woman's hand to his heart, as he muttered forth:

"I have saved you, my darling."

He then turned his eyes on Homer Balfe, uplifting his only arm at the same time, as he cried:

"Brave friend, tell my brothers that I was true to the death, and save Mascot."

In the meantime a fearful struggle was going on between the police and Homer Balfe and his friends. Several of the police officers had fallen, and three of Balfe's friends had received serious wounds, when a man rushed along the street, yelling:

"To the barricades, citizens of Paris, as the hirelings of the emperor have taken our earth-works."

That cry demoralized the police officers who continued the struggle, and they rushed forth into the street, leaving Blanchard and the other wounded men after them. Homer Balfe cast one glance at his dead friend, and then drew the young widow aside, saying:

"The troops are coming and we are saved, I believe."

The leader of the party then sprang to the window and looked out for a few moments before he cried:

"The insurgents are coming this way in disorder, and the regular troops press upon them. Friends, we must not forget poor Mascot."

Homer Balfe continued to watch at the window until the scattered insurgents had swept by, and he then turned to the young widow, crying:

"Watch over our dead friend until I hasten forth to rescue Mascot, as I fear it is almost too late now. Away with me, friends."

CHAPTER XX.—The Watch was Over.

While the fearful scenes were going on in the old building and on the outskirts of Paris, Mascot and some half dozen other prisoners were being led forth to execution. Mascot was one of the first named for execution, as he stood second in the file of prisoners. Poor Mascot was being led forward to the fatal scaffold, when the heavy tramp of armed men was heard outside the gate, followed by a thundering knock at the door. Then a well-known voice rang out, crying:

"Open in the name of law and order."

The officials in the prison became terrified, as the order thus given was followed by louder and stronger blows on the gate, while the voice continued, crying:

"If any of the prisoners are put to death in there, all the officials will suffer the same fate."

At that moment the gate was burst in, and Homer Balfe rushed in at the head of a company of regular troops, crying:

"Where is the prisoner known as Mascot?"

"Here I am, friend!" called the dwarf, as he burst from the guard and hastened to embrace his friend.

Turning an official document in his hand, Balfe cried to the officers in command of the soldiers:

"This is an order for the release of my friend, here signed by the general in command of the troops, and I call for his immediate release."

The little prisoner was released without any

further trouble, the officer in charge of the troops took possession of the prison at the same time. Balfe then hastened to inform Mascot of the struggle in the old building, and of the death of Blanchard and Victor Mauson.

On reaching the old building Mascot's first care was to secure the cipher messages, which he found in the pocket of the dead detective. Some food and wine were soon procured for the half-starving widow and her young friends, and Victor Mauson's body was laid out for burial. Great was the grief of Mabel when she heard of the death of her brave young brother, but she consoled herself by saying:

"He died in the cause of fatherland, and I have brave Fred Carnot left to me yet."

It was night again in the old meeting place where we first found the Sons of the Sword, and Homer Balfe was presiding over some twenty of his brothers. He arose with a proud smile on his face, saying:

"Brave brothers and Sons of the Sword, your work is over for the present. At our last meeting in this place, before the war commenced, I told you that the Watchers from the Rhine had proved faithful up to that time. I have now to tell you that, while we have stood to our work during the greatest dangers, suffering death on the battlefield, imprisonment and starvation, none of our brothers have ever betrayed or broken his oath. As Germany has conquered in the great struggle we are all free for the present, but our society still remain intact, as we may be called upon again to act as Watchers from the Rhine in another struggle. Those of you who desire to return to your native land can do so, while those who are willing to serve on here will find plenty of work in the future, as it is but natural that France will attempt to avenge the great defeat she has suffered. I have concluded to remain on at work here in Paris, but the work is not binding on any of you."

Several present also volunteered to remain on.

Widow Blanchard started business in Paris again, and Mascot became her assistant in the store. The little fellow was very much disappointed, however, when the charming widow declined to accept him as a husband. He was deeply mortified, also, about a year after, when she did accept Homer Balfe, but he consoled himself by saying:

"Well, the president of our society deserves the richest prize, and he saved my life more than once."

Homer Balfe continued to reside in Paris directing the Sons of the Sword, and his charming wife never discovered that the fat clerk in the war office was a German by birth, and solely devoted to the cause of Fatherland. Fred Carnot returned to Germany soon after the close of the war, and assumed his proper name there.

Next week's issue will contain "THE LOST ISLAND; or, THE ROMANCE OF A FORGOTTEN WORLD."

Should you like the stories being broadcast by WJZ from "Mystery Magazine," get a copy, and you can see the same stories in print.

CURRENT NEWS

SMOKER SETS HIS HAIR AFIRE SITTING
IN A BARBER'S CHAIR

Charles Cleento, a well-known resident of Hammonton, N. J., is in the Hammonton Hospital suffering from severe burns, the result of a peculiar accident.

While in a barber's chair getting a hair treatment, in which a preparation containing alcohol was used, he struck a match to light a cigarette. A moment later his hair was on fire. Both hands, eyes and forehead were burned before the fire was put out with wet towels.

PLANS TO DIG UP A CANNON

To go to Petersburg, Va., and dig up a cannon he buried fifty-nine years ago after a battle between Confederate and Union forces is the plan of Henry C. Diehl of Hinton, Okla. Diehl says that he wanted to ship the gun to Watsontown, but the expressman wanted charges paid in advance and, as he was without funds, he buried it, intending to get it later.

He never went back, but he is confident he can

locate it. Moving picture men have asked that he indicate the day that he will dig so they can photograph him.

RACING OSTRICH DIES IN A BATTLE
ROYAL

"Black Diamond," famous ostrich, is dead. The passing of the noted bird recalls the memorable events at Greenville, O., seventeen years ago, when "Black Diamond" sprinted a half-mile in 1.05, setting an American record which still stands.

"Black Diamond" was killed recently in a fight with six other birds at the farm of Tom J. Cockburn, Hot Springs, Ark. So fierce was the struggle that the heavy fence about the inclosure in which the ostriches were confined was splintered in several places. Attendants had difficulty in quelling the riot.

"Black Diamond" was fifty-nine years old. He raced on many tracks from California to New England during a period of fifteen years and never was defeated.

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SIX (6) DANDY SHORT STORIES

"CLUE: ONE HAIRPIN," by H. P. Rhodes

"A DEVILISH CONTRIVANCE," by Maurice Coons

"BETRAYED BY WORDS," by D. E. Kramer

"CHANCE," by Dorothy Shea

"ON THE TRAIL OF DOPE," by Leslie Barreaux

Besides all these it contains an interesting article by TOM FOX (Scotland Yard Detective), called "Bogus Money," and a large collection of shorter items that will please you.

GET A COPY TODAY AND SEE HOW GOOD THIS MAGAZINE IS

THE BOY BEHIND THE BAR

— Or, —

The Terrible Stories He Told

By WILLIAM WADE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER VII.

The Heartless Gambler.

Mrs. McCauley had retired at least an hour before he reached home; so he did not disturb her to tell her the story. He knew that it would spoil her slumber for the night. Nor did he tell her the next morning until after he had finished breakfast and was about to hurry away.

Of course it was a great shock to her, and she begged that he would try to find employment elsewhere.

One night when it was very cold, the thermometer being almost down to zero, a little girl about twelve years old, thinly clad, opened the door and looked in, as if in search of some one.

She had a thin, faded shawl over her head and shoulders, but her hands and fingers were as red as a raw beefsteak through the cold.

She stepped in and pushed the door to behind her. Then she went almost the entire length of the room to where a party of men were sitting, playing cards, with glasses and a bottle of whisky in front of them.

She went up to one of them and said:

"Papa, come home. Mother is very sick, and we have had no supper—not one of us."

The man was about half drunk. He had been coming in there nearly every night for about a month.

He gave utterance to a fierce oath, and told the child that if she didn't go home and stay there, he would "wring her neck." Instead of going away, she went up to the big stove that kept the room warm, and there held out her reddened, cold hands to get the warmth that so badly needed.

Mr. Hutchings went to the man, laid his hand heavily on his shoulder, and said:

"John Gowan, I never dreamed that you were the brute that you are. Is it possible that you are here spending your money for drink and gambling, with your wife and children at home without anything to eat?"

"No; the child is a liar."

"No; it's you that's the liar. Now, you get up and leave here, and if you ever put your face inside my door again it will be smashed—pushed clear through the back of your head."

Gowan rose to his feet, seized his chair, and attempted to hit the proprietor with it; but the man was a powerful man. He caught the chair, wrenched it from his hands and dealt him a stunning blow in the face with his clenched fist.

The child, standing by the stove, began to cry, and started to run out.

John Gowan, however, called out:

"Come back here, little girl. It is a terribly cold night. Warm yourself good by the stove."

"Oh, they won't kill papa, will they?"

"No; they will send him home to your mother."

Gowan was thrown out on the sidewalk, and he scrambled to his feet and went away.

The child was still crying. Hutchings went up to her and quieted her with a few softly spoken words.

"Little girl, is it true that you are without food at home?"

"Yes, sir. We have had nothing but one loaf of bread to-day."

"And is your mother sick?"

"Yes, sir. She has got a high fever."

"Well, you just wait here for a little while, and I will get something to eat for all of you. How many are there in the family?"

"There are three children of us, sir, and mother."

"Jack, go across the street to the restaurant and order a hot supper fixed for four, and have it sent over here. Then call a hack."

Jack did so, and returned quickly.

It took nearly half an hour for the supper to be fixed up, and when it was brought in, the little girl gazed at it on the waiter with a hungry expression on her peaked face.

"Now, little girl," he said to her, "pull your chair up to the table nearest the stove, sit down and eat some supper, and I will send the balance of it home to the others."

She looked at him wistfully, and said:

"I can't eat it, sir, until mother and the rest of them have some."

"You have had nothing but a piece of bread to-day?"

"Yes, sir. Haven't had anything else."

"Gentlemen," said Hutchings, to the several men who were standing around and looking on. "there is a child who would die for her mother and her little brother and sister."

Then he turned to her again, and said:

"You drink a cup of hot tea, and eat anything else you want. There will be enough left for the others. I am going to send for the doctor to see your mother. It's too cold for you to walk back home. I have sent for a hack."

Just then the hack stopped in front of the saloon, and the driver came in to warm his hands and feet at the stove.

Hutchings told him to wait there until the child was ready to go.

"Where is she to go?" the driver asked.

"Somewhere around in Boykin street, I believe. What is the number of your house, little girl?"

The little girl told him.

"I know the place," said the driver.

"Well, you take her down there. The man with the waiter will go along to take the supper to the family. Then you come back here to me for your pay."

The driver knew him very well, for he had carried many a drunken fare away from the place.

(To be continued.)

Radio Fans, tune in WJZ and hear the roaring "Mystery Magazine" stories they are broadcasting.

GOOD READING

RABBIS BAN BARE ARMS

Thirty Galician rabbis have issued a joint ban against the appearance of Jewish girls and women in sleeveless and low-cut dresses. The ban was proclaimed in all the synagogues of Galicia. The rabbis declared in their statement that "this lack of morals in dress is responsible for all the misfortunes that have befallen Jewry."

The Jewish press strongly condemns the action of the rabbis, calling their statement a slander upon Jewish womanhood.

TWO FISH STORIES

A chronicler at Edmonton, Alberta, reports that a trout 42 inches long and weighing 37 pounds has been taken from Lake Minnewanka at Banff. A Brandon, Manitoba, report says that an angler on the Assiniboine River caught a pickerel and a muskallonge on one hook at the same time. He was in the act of hauling out the pickerel when a muskallonge swallowed it, and the angler landed both. The muskallonge was 40 inches long and weighed 17 pounds.

FLOATING ISLANDS

There are such islands. They are of two kinds, the natural and the artificial. The first kind is composed either of driftwood carrying soil and vegetable matter, or of masses of floating vegetation, comprising interlocked reeds, grasses, or roots of trees—sometimes detached from the shore of a lake or river—which form a strong enough framework to carry earth and occasionally growing trees. One of the largest examples of such an island, known as the "sudd" or "sadd," which sometimes forms on the upper Nile, in Egypt, and is composed of papyrus and "um suf," or "mother of mud," thrown by storms from Nile banks where they grow, with earth, ash and small swimming plants. Occasionally such a "sudd" or "sadd" will be 25 miles long and 15 or 20 feet in thickness, the force of the current driving the vegetation so compactly together that men and sometimes large animals can walk across the "sudd" in safety. Other floating islands have been seen up to 100 miles away from the mouths of the large rivers in America, Africa and Asia. They are frequently found in the Mississippi River. In Lake Derwentwater, in England, a floating island appears and disappears at intervals, probably raised to the surface through the action of marsh grass. The artificial type of floating island is made by piling earth upon a framework of wood or matted aquatic vegetation. Such islands are really floating gardens. They were employed by Mexicans before the Spanish conquest, and are still to be seen in China.

"LARGEST DANCE CARNIVAL IN WORLD" WILL BE HELD AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

There probably will be exemplification of the duck dip, the cemetery larch and the wheel chair girl. There also may be gyrations of which old Mrs. Terpsichore never dreamed. Tex Rickard

of Madison Square Garden fame, has blossomed forth as president of the World's Championship Ballroom Dancing Contest, and announced that plans were being made to house in the Garden before many moons what the press agent says is going to be "the largest dance carnival ever held in the world."

Just now Mr. Rickards and his associates are busy with the rules of the contest. They say that 2,000 of the world's best dancers will compete for \$25,000 in cash prizes offered by the president of the W. C. B. D. C.

The plans are laid to bring out—again quoting from the press agent—"not only the skill and grace of dancing, but just exactly what this form of pleasure means to the more than 75,000,000 people in the United States." The notice does not state whether the conservative estimate of the nation's population is based on a census taken by dancing instructors. In any event, it is intelligence that Mr. Rickard looks for—intelligence in interpretation of the dance. He says:

"It is simple enough to find out who are the best dancers, judged by the popular opinion they receive at the finals. But we plan to go further. There will be rules by experts, which we believe will bring out all that the dance stands for and means to the American people and why it is today the most popular form of divertissement."

The first prize is \$12,000 in government gold bonds. A book of rules governing the phases of the contest is being prepared.

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INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

A CONDENSER KINK

Dust or dirt caught between the plates of a variable condenser can be cleaned out very quickly with the aid of ordinary pipe cleaners.

INTERFERENCES

X-ray and violet-ray machines used by physicians cause considerable interference in radio reception when their high-frequency waves are in use. They should be shielded to reduce this interference.

Any kind of metal would do to enclose them and cut down interference to a minimum—aluminum, tin, sheet iron, copper or lead.

Generators and transformers also cause interference and should be shielded.

RECEIVING SET RANGE

Because at one time or another radio fans have received stations 1,500 miles away they think that this is the receiving range of their sets, and if asked what the range is they will give this mileage. This is the wrong way to estimate the range of a set. The proper method is to see how far the set can receive signals in the daytime, between 11 o'clock in the morning and 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Stations that can be picked up regularly between these hours are the ones upon which the receiving range should be based.

FILE FOR REAMING HOLES

The largest drill most small hand drills can take is a quarter of an inch in diameter. Now, a quarter-inch hole will just pass the shafts of instruments like variable condensers, variocouplers, variometers and so forth, but as often as not the mounting screw holes are a little off, and the shafts will then bind.

To ream out the hole, there is nothing as cheap or as rapid as an ordinary flat file. By inserting the tang in the opening, and giving the file a few strong twists, even the most upyielding bakelite will give way. The reaming should be done from both sides of the panel in order to insure a uniform hole.

ABOUT FREQUENCIES

Frequencies above 10,000 cycles are called radio frequencies and are inaudible to the human ear. Frequencies below 10,000 cycles are known as audio frequencies because they are audible to the ear. Incoming radio signals are radio frequencies and the tubes that amplify such currents are called radio frequency amplifiers. They are placed in the circuit ahead of the detector. After the currents are passed through the detector they are rectified to audio frequencies, and the tubes that amplify them are called audio frequency amplifiers. Radio frequency amplifiers increase the distance of a set because they give weak signals from far away stations sufficient strength to actuate the detector. Audio amplifiers increase the volume, but do not increase the distance range, as that depends upon the efficiency of the radio frequency amplifier and the sensitiveness of the detector.

HEED THIS

Handle a radio very carefully; it is not related to a football in any way.

Don't forget to throw the aerial switch after you have put away the radio. A storm may come up during the night and the lightning will have a straight path into your home.

Don't tear apart a manufactured set and try and build a set of your own design. The parts from a manufactured set are usually unsuited for any other use than which they were primarily intended for.

As an added safety measure it is always a good idea, after you have put your set away for the summer, to connect the aerial and ground wires together.

Don't buy a cheaply constructed radio. It is better to have a good crystal set than a bad tube set.

"C" BATTERY FOR REFLEX

Concerning the use of a C battery with the Harkness two-tube reflex, proceed as follows: The wire connecting the A minus binding post with the ground is broken and the C battery substituted, the plus terminal of the little battery going to the A plus binding post. The other terminal of the C battery is then connected to the ground. The use of the C battery will result in a much longer life for the B batteries and it will also tend toward clearer reception. The value of the C battery will depend upon the tubes used and upon the plate voltage used. The values are given in the instruction sheet which accompanies each standard tube. A 4½-volt C battery will usually be satisfactory. The C battery's life in service is long, as it is not delivering current and its end usually comes from old age. For this reason it can be placed inside the set. It will need no attention for many months and there is an advantage in keeping the leads as short as possible.

HANDY IN SOLDERING

A hot soldering iron is always a problem. When a radio constructor is wiring a set he usually is so engrossed in keeping track of the wires that when he finishes one joint he just blindly pushes the iron away from him and lets it rest wherever it happens to fall. That "wherever" may be an inflammable piece of paper or a meltable piece of apparatus, and the result may be a small but annoying conflagration.

It is a simple matter to prevent such an occurrence. Complicated wire stands and supports are not necessary; a plain, flat sheet of scrap iron, about a foot square and at least a sixteenth of an inch thick, will turn the trick very nicely. It is left on the table within an arm's length of the set being wired. When a joint has been completed and the solderer wants to get the iron out of the way quickly, all he has to do is to let it fall on the iron plate, and he can then forget it.

Of course, this is all assuming that an electric iron is used, as by far the majority of radio fans use electric irons. If a gas-heated iron is employed, then the fan simply must go to the trouble of carefully placing it back over the gas flame so that it will be ready for further soldering.

1-TUBE REFLEX

A reflex circuit which is building up a reputation as a distance getter is the Tri-Coil circuit. This circuit makes use of a special transformer, designed for use in reflex circuits and made in different designs to fit the characteristics of the different tubes.

The outstanding advantage of a well designed or constructed reflex set is the economy in tubes and battery consumption that is possible. A reflex set, using one tube and a crystal rectifier, should give results very nearly as satisfactory, in point of volume and distance, as those obtainable with a tube used as a radio frequency amplifier, a rectifier of some sort and a tube used as an audio frequency amplifier. A one-tube reflex set, made with parts of good design and properly assembled, should be expected to rival a good regenerative set in the matter of distance and it should be expected to operate a loud-speaker on the local stations. To accomplish this requires a good antenna (although a reflex, like most other receivers, will work after a fashion on almost any antenna that is any good at all) and intelligent operation.

The Tri-Coil reflex is tuned by means of a variometer and a condenser which are in series. A variable condenser of .0005 mfd. capacity will operate satisfactorily. The variometer should be a very good one and one in which the losses are as low as possible. The set will tune very sharply and the amateur will find it advantageous to use some means of getting micrometer adjustments of both the condenser and the variometer dials. A good (and it should be good and not merely fairly good) vernier condenser can be used to advantage.

The set will pick up stations without difficulty, but the user will find that there is a best point on both dials for each of the local stations. When these best points are found there will be the maximum selectivity and the maximum volume.

The radio frequency transformer is the Tri-Coil. This is name especially for the circuit. If a transformer is used it should be used in a circuit of the correct design and it may require different values of components. The audio frequency transformer may be any good make. Modern transformers are made in standard sizes and the Tri-Coil transformer is no exception. A ratio as high as 1 to 10 may be used, but the amateur will probably be willing to compromise a little volume to get a better tuning. However, there would be no great advantage in using a transformer of less than 1 to 6 or, at the very best, 1 to 4 ratio. A little experimenting may be necessary in getting the right value for the condenser across the secondary of the transformer. Now that everything should be said, the crystal rectifier should not be one in which a crystal is used.

MEANING OR SQUEALS AND HUMS

There is one defect in a receiver that produces a distinctly characteristic noise. This is an open connection in the grid circuit. The sound it produces is very much like the one that you hear when using a toll line on the regular telephone. It is a ringing hum. Such an open circuit often occurs at the switch contacts in a single circuit receiver or when the pig-tail connections on the grid variometer break, due to long service. What makes this particular difficulty perplexing is the fact that local broadcast signals can be heard faintly and regardless of the setting of the tuning control. When this happens in the new single circuit receiver that the experimenter has just completed, it is usually because he has everything connected properly but has forgotten to ground one side of the A battery.

With the regenerative set, the inquisitive fan usually discovers that if he turns the regeneration control to a certain position he is greeted with an ear-splitting squeal. In most cases this is normal operation and is to be expected. What causes it is the fact that regeneration has been pushed to the extent that grid-blocking action takes place. The tube is momentarily stopped from oscillating by this action and must wait until the excessive negative charge can leak off the grid before resuming oscillations. The resultant starting and stopping takes place at the audio frequency of the squeal. The squealing point should be somewhat beyond the position on the regeneration control that produces gentle oscillation which is indicated by hissing phones.

On the other hand, if the squeal and the point at which oscillation occurs are so close together as to be troublesome, it is necessary to spread them apart. Fewer turns on the tickler or a lower resistance grid leak will do this. In the single circuit set with all the inductance in and the tuning condenser at the low capacity setting the set is very apt to squeal. In this case it is necessary to remove a few turns from the tickler coil. Except for this cause little trouble is experienced when using the UV-199 and 201-A. But with the UV-200 and the WD-11 and 12, the set sometimes tends to squeal or plop at a slow rate when the oscillating point is approached. In this case a lower resistance grid leak will remedy the trouble.

Most anybody can succeed in building a one-stage audio amplifier and have it behave, but it is when they try the second stage that they sometimes produce a much better howler than an amplifier. What happens in this case is the amplifying transformer forms a circuit that is resonant to about 800 cycles and tube capacity, together with electrostatic coupling, due to the manner in which the circuit is arranged, start this audio circuit to oscillating. The remedy is simple. Be sure that no plate leads come near the grid leads. And see that the grid leads are as short as possible. If after attending to these two points the howl persists, reverse the leads to the primary of the second audio transformer and also those of the first, if necessary.

Say, boys, do you know that some of the stories in "Mystery Magazine" are broadcast by WJZ?

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, AUGUST 27, 1924

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

DOG POISONING STIRS BAVARIA

Great excitement has been caused in Bavaria by the poisoning of General Ludendorff's pack hounds. Nationalists were so enraged when they heard of the deaths of the dogs that they charged various politicians with having inspired the outrage against Ludendorff.

Even the chief magistrate of Munich was accused of knowledge of the plot, but he issued an indignant statement, saying he was too busy with important affairs to pay any attention to such an absurd accusation growing out of petty politics.

JAILED AFTER EATING A CIGAR SANDWICH

A man walked into a cafe on the Place de la Station at Antwerp recently and indicated by signs to the proprietor that he was dumb and also that he was hungry. He was served with a ham sandwich. More gesticulations showed he wanted to smoke, and he was handed two cigars.

He placed the cigars on top of the ham, carefully replied the top piece of bread and ate the ham and Havana sandwich with evident relish. His meal finished he attempted to leave without paying and the police were called in. The man was placed in jail and now refuses even to make signs.

NETS A SEA MONSTER

A monster from the seas off Africa, its native habitat, visited the rich fishing grounds off the Florida coast to get a change of diet and promptly became entangled in fishermen's nets. The fish is known as the gigantic eel ray or two-horned manta (manta biroseris being the scientific name).

The fish is one of the largest specimens of this rare and formidable monsters ever caught. It measured 15 feet across the back and its mouth was 5 feet wide and from it was taken more than a barrel of fish. The monster could swallow a man. Its weight was 1,100 pounds.

Four boats were required to land the catch and one fisherman of the group was drowned in the process.

RADIO TO LIGHTEN VIGIL OF HUDSON LIFE SAVERS

Up at Fort Washington Point, where hundreds of bathers splash and canoeists get into difficulties with cross currents in the Hudson River, thirty life-guards volunteers from the 102d Regiment of Engineers will be on duty, but the lookouts, perched where they may see what goes on around them, will not hear what the wild waves say, nor will they listen to the oral bouquets tossed at them by feminine admirers.

For Sergeant Brennan has prepared an experiment with Walker Bossard, captain of the corps, and if all goes well the earpieces of a radio set will be glued to the lookout's ears.

So they will keep their vigil and at the same time be entertained.

LAUGHS

Kicker—A judge has ruled that a woman shouldn't spend more on clothes than on rent. Mrs. Kicker—Well, then, we shall have to pay bigger rent.

"And how often do you go to church, Mrs. Smith?" Mrs. Smith (working it out)—Well, sir, me an Bill's been married five years, an' there's the four children, so I gets there about once a year.

Saidee—Why did you break your engagement with Larry so suddenly? Haidee—He insulted me. Why, when I finally said yes to him and he took me in his arms, his heart was beating perfectly normal.

"What makes you think that flashy widow has so much money?" "She surely is the best dressed woman at Palm Beach!" "All right, but don't forget that some of the most brilliant flowers haven't got a scent."

Youngly—Did you ever notice that the matrimonial process is like that of making a call? You go to adore, you ring a belle and you give your name to a maid. Cynicus—Yes, and then you're taken in.

"What do you think of the new gas stove, Bridget?" "Sure, mum, it's a great invention. I've had it burning right along ever since you got it and it hasn't gone out of gas yet."

She—Gambling is wrong, because, as some one says, it is a means of getting money for nothing. He—Not with me it isn't—it's a means of getting nothing for my money.

Jimmy (tearfully)—Father, the d-donkey kicked me! Father—have you been annoying it? Jimmy—No. I was only t-trying to c-carve my name on it.

If you have a radio, listen in on WJZ. They are broadcasting stories from "Mystery Magazine."

BRIEF BUT POINTED

ADDS TO BIG LONG ISLAND ESTATE

Mrs. Evelyn Field, wife of Marshall Field, of New York and Chicago, who is having developed what will be one of the finest country estates in America near Huntington, L. I., has added to her vast holdings through the purchases of three additional tracts of land from Mr. J. E. Barney and others.

The Field estate comprises more than two thousand acres at Lloyds Neck, with more than a mile of Long Island Sound shore front, and it has been under development for the past three years, with two more years needed to complete it. An entire village with farm buildings, similar in idea to the Biltmore estate in North Carolina, is being laid out.

BEES SEIZE A FARM

A swarm of bees has played havoc with harvesting operations at the farm of C. K. Paxson, three miles west of Coatesville, Pa., near Sadsburyville. The other day Paxson and his farm hands started to haul in hay.

Two wagons were loaded when a swarm of bees suddenly appeared, about half of the bees alighting on one load and the other half on the other. Paxson and his helpers gave way before the onslaught and devoted their energies to a neighboring wheat field.

A few nights later Paxson decided to take one load of hay to the barn. In the morning, when he opened the barn, he found the honey-makers had taken possession of that structure and resisted all efforts to make them vacate.

Every man and woman on the place has felt the stings of the bees, and at noon operations on the farm were at a complete standstill while efforts were being made to hive the swarm.

STRANGE LIGHT SEEN WHILE EARTH SINKS

Pine Hollow, a little settlement nestled among the chain of Rattlesnake Hills, west of Warner, Okla., is excited over a strange disturbance that came on the earth like a volcano eruption and dropped a big patch of land several feet while a strange light hovered over the section for a long time.

Located about a quarter of a mile from the foot of the hill the earth was pulled to a tunnel six feet wide by a gigantic mole two feet wide. The earth makes a bowl like a horseshoe. At one end of the horseshoe the ground is more than six feet below the surface of the surrounding area.

According to a negro preacher known as "Parson" Jones, trees have been uprooted and large stones moved and displaced. Also the wake of the trail some of the trees have been heavily gnawed in a hasty crack. All vegetation within the strange horseshoe has been killed and some of the effects of the changed position

OHIO SCHOOL HAS SNAKE FOR "PET"

Children of the Antioch school, Yellow Springs, Ohio, are losing their fear of harmless reptiles. For they have a "pet" snake.

Miss Hazi Gifford, teacher of the primary grades, sought to make her swell charges understand that non-poisonous snakes are friends of man and should not be killed on sight. So she formed a "snake club." Only those who handle the "pet" in such a manner as to indicate all lack of fear can join.

Many of Miss Gifford's pupils fondle the "pet" as if it were a kitten. Each club member has the privilege of taking the snake home with him overnight. The girls and boys have grown jealous of this privilege and often are heard to warn the fortunate one of dire calamity should anything happen to the "pet" in the hands of another.

One boy, granted the privilege of taking the reptile home, was afraid his parents would object. So he left it at a shop here. The next morning the boy, not over ten, came staggering to school with his treasure coiled about his neck.

UTAH SILVER FOX FARM

Raising of foxes on a wholesale scale is the plan for which a four acre wire inclosed fox farm is being built on the A. M. Miller ranch in the Uintah Valley, seven miles from Ogden.

The Ogden fox farm is declared to be the "last word" in construction, with model pens and guard areas, as well as combined home, fox kitchen and watch tower for the fox farm superintendent. Within the wire inclosure is a guard area and then in the center of the field are the fifty-three pens, each of them forty feet by twelve feet in ground dimensions and eight feet high, with a two foot overhang. This ten feet, as well as the entire carpet of the fox pen, is entirely of fine mesh steel wire of great strength. The gates are also of wire; the posts are of steel construction.

The United States biological survey estimates that there are 12,000 to 15,000 silver foxes in the United States, found on fox farms in the prime fur belt. Utah is considered as being in that belt, its climatic conditions being excellent for fur bearing animals. While the Ogden fox farm will have \$85,000 worth of foxes when it is started, the owners say there is little possibility of any one attempting to steal any of the animals. The guard fences will be an initial protection against loss. Besides these there will be the protection from the guarded fox keeper's house and watch tower—together with the defense that the foxes would make for themselves. No successful robbery of a fox farm has ever been recorded though special precaution is taken to prevent them in every instance.

The detective stories in "Mystery Magazine" are carried on WJZ would not broadcast them.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

HER STRAWBERRY CROP GIVES GIRL A PRIZE

Elsie Artz, thirteen years old, of Pottsville, Pa., has broken the State record in strawberry growing. She entered in the competition of the Boys' and girls' club and was awarded first prize, the contest being under the auspices of Schuylkill County Farm Bureau.

Her record was 814 quarts of berries grown on one-twentieth of an acre, which is equal to 16,280 quarts per acre.

Joseph Lutz of Summit Station, who grew 473 quarts on a similar plot, was second. The average in the contest was 3,960 quarts per acre. The Schuylkill Haven Trust Company and Valley View Bank paid prizes to the winners.

MATCHES BLAMED FOR MOST FIRES

Fire losses in the United States are high as compared with those in most European countries. The great number of wooden buildings in this land helps to swell the total.

Matches used by smokers head the list of causes. Spontaneous combustion ranks second, and defective flues and chimneys are third. Fires from stoves, boilers and pipes do about half as much harm as the carelessly dropped match or cigarette. Electricity is listed as fifth among causes.

Lightning is sixth. Almost as dangerous are sparks that fall on roofs. Petroleum lamps and carelessly handled gasoline were once a prolific source of fire alarms, but fires due to these causes are now comparatively few. Hot ashes give the firemen many a run.

The entire loss from incendiary fires is scarcely one-tenth as great as that traceable to matches. Other fire causes that stand high in official statistics are illuminating gas, hot grease, tar, wax and asphalt, and the incineration of rubbish. Fireworks are supposed to cause immense fire losses, but they are only twentieth on the list.

NATIONAL PARK FOR SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is to have a great national park similar to those which exist in America, Canada and Australia. It lies in a wondrous country, Montaux-Sources, in Drakensberg, a land of peaks and pine forests unequalled in splendor throughout South Africa. Here are the caves containing the Bushman paintings, subject of profoundly interesting historical controversy.

It is here too that the lordly Tugela takes its source in a water-cut tunnel through which the river flows from a height of 2,000 feet. Nearly the whole of the region in the fifty miles extent is owned by the Government, and the Natal people have cordially accepted the ownership of this magnificent natural park.

The forest and game are to be preserved, and arrangements have been made for the restoration of the natural beauty. Thousands of years ago the forest and the bushes and the eland used to roam this gorgeous country, and soon it is hoped that these animals will find here a natural home.

All shooting of game in the park and the ac-

struction of bush by natives has been prohibited, and the Natal Administration is confident that all these species will increase and the bush and grass soon be restored. In the Mont-aux-Sources area a park superintendent is now in residence with a staff of rangers. Certain parts of the National Park are especially fitted for the purpose of afforestation, and exotic timber trees are to be introduced.

The Natal Administration is considering the erection of a larger hotel for the accommodation of visitors than the single buildings at present existing. The idea is that the new hotel should be on a site about 4,000 feet above sea level, with the mountains several thousand feet above, and within easy access to bushes, streams and waterfalls, so that picnic parties can have a wide choice of beauty spots and bathing pools.

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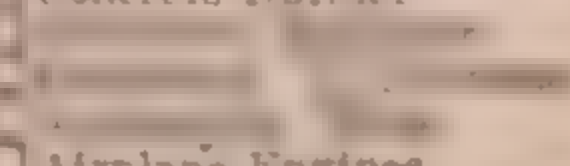
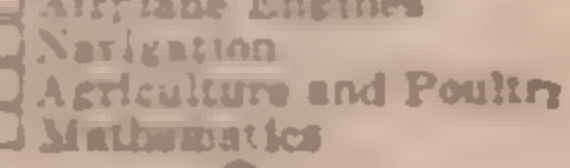
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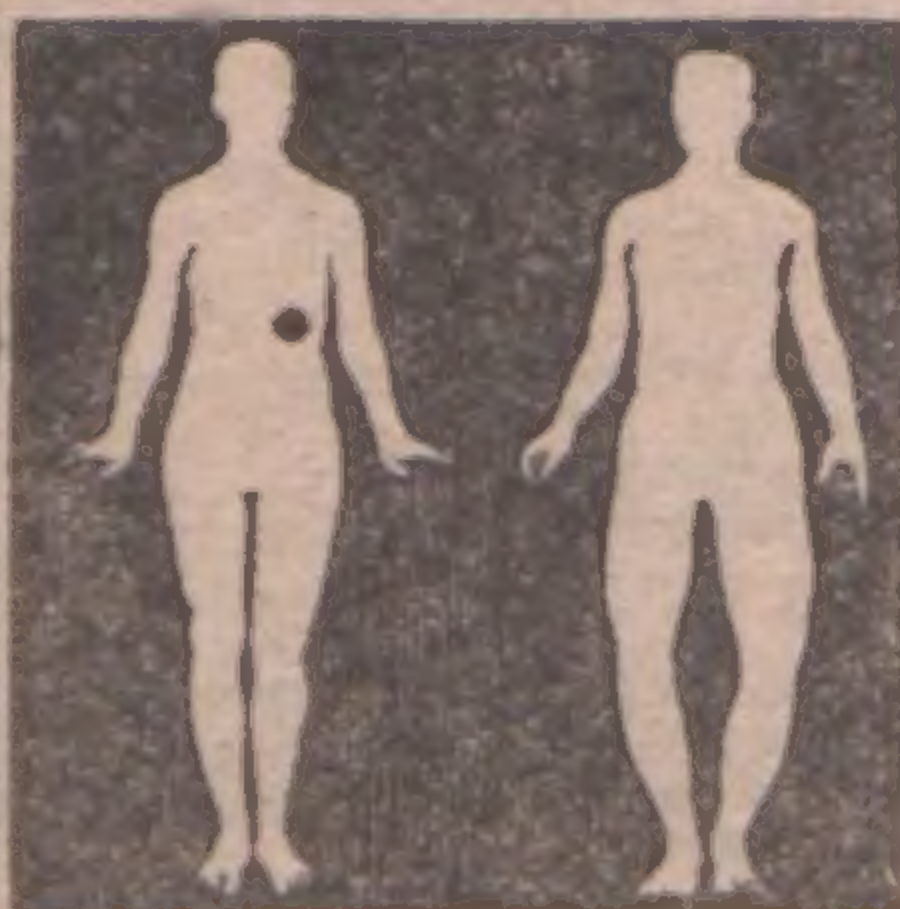
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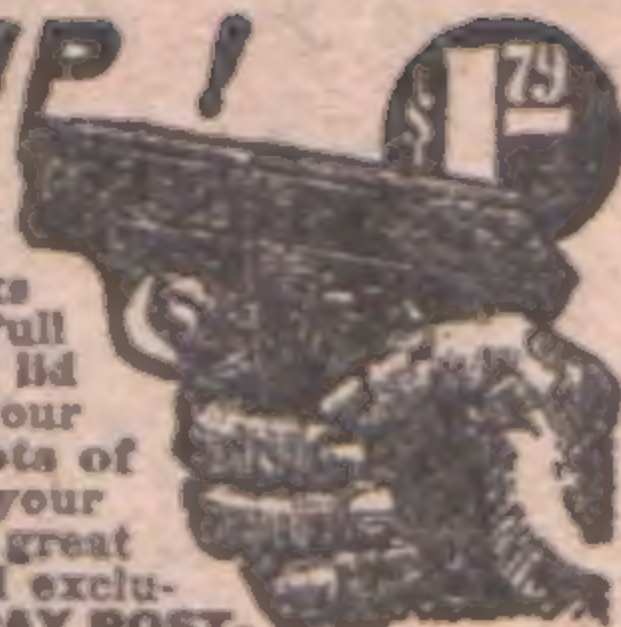
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